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ONE DOLLAR

JANUARY 15, 1982

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Coming to terms with Mary

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The Editors
Jaruzelski's coup—and after

Denis MacShane
Solidarity & the church

SOLIDARNOSC

CHILE: REPRESSION BECOMES ROUTINE

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Correspondence

Defending Mr. Begin

Washington, D.C.

To the Editors: A stable Middle East is unquestionably in the highest strategic interest of the United States and what remains of the Western world. Right now, however, practically the whole area is a sea of turbulence in which more than ten localized conflicts and internal upheavals are taking place. For example, the Iran-Iraq war, the tensions between Libya and Egypt and the tragic civil war in Lebanon in which 120,000 Moslems and Christians have died in the last six years.

In fact, the only quiet spot is the Israel-Egypt border and this is the result of the Peace Treaty based upon the policy of the United States, Egypt and Israel. The Camp David peace process is the only positive and constructive development in the Middle East in more than fifty years.

You are quite wrong in suggesting in your editorial "Biting the Mideast Bullet" [Nov. 6] that this policy is not working. The facts negate your perception.

Prime Minister Begin, who is the only one of the three principals of Camp David still in office, contributed much to the on-going peace process which has borne its first fruit — the treaty between Israel and Egypt. At this very time, negotiations are proceeding on the furtherance of the autonomy plan, also based on an initial proposal by Mr. Begin.

Far from abusing him as you have done, you should welcome his efforts and acknowledge the sacrifices and contribution that he and his government have made towards a peaceful settlement in the area. This is particularly appropriate now when steps are being taken and statements are being made that could endanger, if not undermine, this vital peace process.

You ignore the enormous accumulation of arms in the Arab countries who are being supplied by the Soviet Union, Western Europe and even the United States. Israel has no alternative but to take such measures as it deems necessary to safeguard its population. You are concerned about the Lebanese civilians in Beirut, but say not one word about the Israeli civilians who came under constant bombardment from the terrorists who sought and found refuge in Beirut and perpetrated their dastardly deeds in their expectation of immunity. Indeed the relationship between Israel and the United States is based on the recognition that Israel will look after her own security. She has never requested manpower from anyone to defend her population and sovereignty. It is in the West's interest to supply her with the wherewithal to do so. On the other hand, there is need for strategic cooperation between the United States and Israel in confronting the threat of the Soviet Union and her surrogates. In that respect, Israel is a front-ranker in the Western world. She has faced Soviet arms since 1955 — and not only arms. Also Soviet strategic planning, Soviet instruction and even Soviet personnel. Her experience is invaluable to United States strategy.

HARRY ZVI HURWITZ
Minister of Information
Embassy of Israel

Our barbaric prisons

Nashville, Tenn.

To the Editors: The lead editorial in the Oct. 9 issue raised some real concerns about the U.S. Supreme Court's *Rhodes* v. *Chapman* decision in which Justice Powell, speaking for eight of the brethren, declared "The Constitution does not mandate comfortable prisons." The decision went on to declare it was all right to double-cell folks as long as the conditions don't breach "the contemporary standard of decency."

Aside from its death penalty decisions in 1976, there probably has been no single decision of the Court which so illustrates the gap between the marble majesty which ensconces the members of the Court and the terrible reality of what really takes place in the states. Already, the impact of this decision is being felt in one Southern state and I shudder to think what the future might hold for my region and our barbaric prisons. As someone who has been working for prison reform since 1974 in the South, I thought the readers of *Commonweal* might be interested in the effect *Chapman* has already had in Louisiana and what it might portend for the future.

As of this writing, Louisiana is riding the crest of a wave of oil money which has enabled that state to build prisons at an alarming rate and incarcerate more folks per capita than forty-six other states in the country. Under the guidance of Paul Phelps, Secretary of Corrections, those people have usually been housed one to a cell. Although I have disagreed strongly with Mr. Phelps and many of his policies, he clearly was committed to cutting the level of violence in the system. To this end, he and Frank Blackburn, Warden of plantation style Angola prison, have successfully reduced the level of violence at Angola over the last five years. As a result of *Rhodes* v. *Chapman*, the Governor decided to promote double-celling and thus insure an escalation of violence throughout the Louisiana system. Mr. Phelps objected strongly and as a result was fired. In the wake of his dismissal, Warden Blackburn has been "promoted" to a desk job and Ross Maggio, well known for a diametrically different approach, has been appointed warden at Angola.

It takes very little imagination to predict what is going to happen in Angola as the state begins to implement its new policies. With the Supreme Court giving it license to overcrowd, Louisiana will continue its harsh sentencing policies and fill up Angola, double-celling along the way, and violence between prisoners and from prisoners toward guards and vice versa will increase dramatically. It is

(Continued on page 29)

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GOLAN HEIGHTS, POLITICAL DEPTHS

RELATIONS BETWEEN Israel and the United States are at their lowest point in history. They are unlikely to get much better unless the Begin-directed Israeli foreign policy makes an abrupt shift.

International reaction to Israel's annexation of the Golan heights was universally negative. The foreign ministers of all nations in the European Community declared the action to be illegal and invalid. The Israeli move was a particular blow to President Mubarak of Egypt, already under fire from his Arab neighbors for his negotiations with Israel, and Egypt's statement of opposition to the annexation was particularly sharp. At the United Nations the United States supported a unanimous Security Council resolution terming the annexation null and void, with U.S. spokesmen expressing particular American displeasure that the Israelis had acted while world attention was focused on events in Poland. Nonetheless, by all accounts the government of Prime Minister Menachem Begin was stunned by the United States decision to suspend the American-Israeli strategic cooperation agreement as a punitive measure for Israel's action. Part of the reason for this Israeli surprise is lack of plain speaking on the part of the Reagan administration. The United States strongly disapproved of Israel's destruction of Iraq's nuclear reactor and of the air attacks on Palestinian headquarters in a Beirut residential neighborhood which resulted in the deaths of scores of innocent civilians, and as a result Washington cut off plane deliveries to Israel for a short time thereafter. Yet at the Reagan-Begin summit meeting in Washington a few months ago, the official report said that neither topic was brought up by Mr. Reagan for discussion.

However much this previous silence may have contributed to Israeli surprise at the United States reaction, the tone and content of Mr. Begin's response was astonishing. He compared the U.S. demand that Israel rescind its Golan heights annexation to "a concept of the days of the Inquisition [when] our forefathers were burned at the stake and did not rescind their faith." The United States had no right to preach to Israel about civilian loss of life, Mr. Begin said: "We have read the history of World War II, and we know what happened to civilians when you took action against the enemy. We have also read the history of the Vietnam war, and your concept of body counts." And in what must have been the harshest statement ever made by an Israeli prime minister, and one endorsed by the entire Israeli cabinet, Mr. Begin went on to accuse the Reagan administration of treating Israel like a "vassal state." Noting that this was the third time in six months that the U.S. had "punished" Israel, the prime minister said: "You will not frighten us with punishment. He who threatens us will find us deaf to his threats. We are willing to listen only to rational arguments. You have no right to punish Israel, and I protest the use of this term."

Israel has occupied the Golan Heights since the 1967 war, and it is small wonder

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that it should be unwilling to see it go back to a hostile Syria in the future. There is no doubt that the Heights in the hands of an enemy of Israel would be a grave danger to that nation's security. But it is totally unacceptable that its neutralization be accomplished unilaterally rather than in some future peace negotiations like those with Egypt—just as it is unacceptable that the sins of either World War II or Vietnam be used to justify the present slaughter of civilians in Lebanon. There is no way the United States can seem to tolerate such actions if it is to retain any credibility in the area, and President Reagan was right to take prompt steps to make that point clear. The next move should be up to the Begin government, but there is solid reason to feel serious concern as to what that move might be. The Israeli prime minister has always regarded the Golan Heights as part of Israel, but so too does he view the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, and who knows what else. Has the Begin government given up any hope of peace with its Arab neighbors? Will the next step in the Mideast be further annexations by Israel? And if so, how is the United States to respond?

In his message to Washington, Prime Minister Begin referred to what he called "an ugly anti-Semitic campaign" in connection with the AWACS struggle, and he said: "No one

THE JARUZELSKI COUP

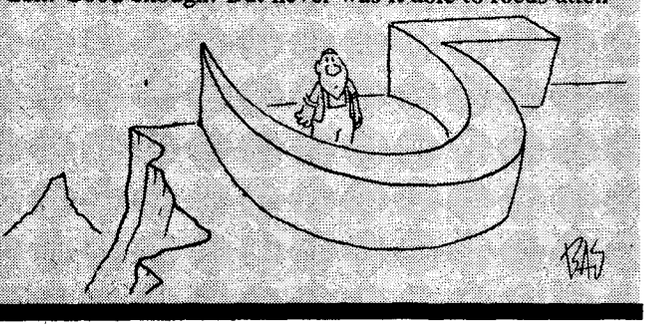
The struggle of Solidarity and the Polish people for freedom is not over. But it is important to be clear about what has happened since December 13. On that date, Poland, like so many other nations in the world, fell victim to a military coup. As usual, the aim of that coup was to protect the Old Order from the vital force of a popular movement. As usual, much of the world tried to put the best face on things: the junta that had installed itself in power would only be temporary; a return to more open political procedures would occur as soon as the emergency was over; and things really had been getting out of hand anyway, hadn't they? The cover of the German weekly *Der Spiegel* declared that now it was the army's turn to "save" Poland. The prestigious intellectual weekly *Die Zeit* editorialized about General Jaruzelski as "Poland's last chance" who deserved Germany's wishes for success and even discreet political support, lest the Soviets be provoked and detente be extinguished.

Nothing, of course, would have provided as solid a basis for lasting detente as the example of a Communist nation able to evolve non-violently from totalitarianism to a modicum of democracy. And nothing has undermined any genuine detente as much as Jaruzelski's and the Soviets' brutal repression of a brave movement for elementary dignity and liberty. How responsibility is, in the end, divided between the Polish general and the Kremlin leaders is not terribly crucial. The guillotine requires both its deadly blade and the board that holds the victim's head in place.

That there are so few practical measures available for restraining the executioners tempts us to vent our frustration elsewhere — on the more or less complacent onlookers, for example, or even on the victim himself. Thus the lament, often from sources that have never exhibited much sympathy or familiarity with living social movements, that Solidarity "went too far" or had reduced Poland to economic chaos. Not every move of Solidarity was tactically wise, but even its proposal for a referendum on Communist rule was never formally adopted by the union. And this view ignores months of broken promises by the government, including withdrawal of a plan for economic reform and an offer for sharing power with Solidarity that was a sham and a cover for the prolonged, painstaking preparations for Jaruzelski's coup. Blaming the victim won't do.

More complicated are the recriminations now passing among the various Western nations and statesmen. It should be said from the start that there is no diplomatic or economic response to the Polish counterrevolution which is obviously the right one. Every measure has some drawbacks as well as advantages, and so one must leave room for reasonable disagreement. Besides, over the long-run it will not be to the benefit of peace and democracy to pour on Helmut Schmidt the reproaches that belong to Comrades Jaruzelski and Brezhnev. Nonetheless, the business-as-usual, it's-only-an-internal-Polish-affair responses of Schmidt, Pierre Elliott Trudeau, and Willy Brandt were pathetically mismatched to the events at hand. Brandt's comments, in effect, were disavowed by the Socialist International (of which he is president), which thought that the crushing of a socialist workers' movement deserved something better. Interestingly enough, the strongest protests of the Polish repression, aside from those of the pope, have come from the Socialist government of France — and from the notoriously left-wing French intellectuals. Indeed, the French have complained that the U.S. reaction has been lax.

Which brings us to Washington. For over a year, the Reagan administration has simply been unable to recognize how much was at stake in Poland. Of course, it issued warnings against Soviet intervention, and obtained allied agreement on a list of reprisals in case of such an intervention. Good enough. But never was it able to focus atten-



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will frighten the large and free Jewish community in the United States. No one will succeed in deterring them with anti-Semitic propaganda. They will stand by our side. This is the land of their forefathers, and they have a right and a duty to support it." No doubt Mr. Begin is right. No matter what he does, American Jews and other friends of Israel—like the editors of this journal—will continue to defend that nation's right to exist against all its enemies, to support the state of Israel in general if not in every particular action of every particular Israeli government. But once again it must be said that Mr. Begin does not make this support one bit easier.

tion on the possibilities in Poland in a positive sense. Never did it formulate an approach that conceived of the events in Poland as equivalent in importance to the development and deployment of new missile systems, and as deserving of large-scale economic and political investments. Instead, the administration has been sinking in its supply-side quicksand, or playing Punch-and-Judy with the Ogre Quaddafi, or undermining its own moral credibility by hinting at an invasion of Nicaragua and shipping arms to the soulbrothers of General Jaruzelski in El Salvador and Guatemala. The fact that the same strategists who play out every hypothetical variation of nuclear "war-fighting" left the administration unprepared for the Polish martial-law variation on a Soviet intervention indicates the distortion of priorities. When the day of reckoning actually arrived, the Reagan administration was no more prepared than Carter had been for Afghanistan — despite a much longer time to consider the possibilities. What is worse, the administration had never even got around to considering the kind of "Marshall Plan for Poland" proposals that now, in the wake of disaster, are being advanced.

That being said, President Reagan has now done the right thing in instituting sanctions against both Poland and Russia. Not that very much should be expected from these sanctions. They are mild, and leave plenty in store for what is still a real possibility: a full-fledged Soviet intervention following a renewal of Solidarity's strength. The president was also wise not to entangle the conflict over Poland with the European disarmament talks, which, like START, should proceed on the basis that East and West are pursuing their self-interest (in survival) and not trying to bridge the many other deep differences as well as the chasm of distrust between them.

The sanctions are a minimal expression of decency. Leave it to others to dismiss them as "symbolic." Some of us believe that only in symbols do we express the most important realities. And if the sanctions affect no one else, they should at least affect the West. It is true that no one argues for the use of arms in Poland, but as the editor of the left-wing *Le Nouvel Observateur* noted, we can at least arm our own spirits and protect ourselves from a form of moral corruption.

Post-Tito Yugoslavia

ESCALATING CONFLICT

WEAK LEADERS VS. THE CHURCH

RELATIONS BETWEEN the Yugoslav regime and the Catholic church have hit a twenty-year low. Several priests have been sentenced to long prison terms while others are awaiting trial. Even Archbishop Franjo Kuharic, the head of the Yugoslav hierarchy, has been publicly threatened with jail. The sequence of happenings which has led to this sorry state of affairs is far easier to document than are the underlying, hidden reasons for the dangerous turn of events.

Here is what has happened: In December, 1980, Cvijetin Mijatovic, the then head of Yugoslavia's rotating collective presidency, visited Pope John Paul II in Rome and invited the pontiff to visit Yugoslavia, an invitation which was accepted, though no precise date for the trip was announced. The prospect of the pope's trip apparently alarmed and angered the hard-liners in the Yugoslav motley leadership and, of course, the secret police. They correctly foresaw an enormous outpouring of popular support for the Polish pope and the church in Croatia, where as in Poland, Catholicism and nationalism are closely linked.

Throughout the thirty-six years of Communist rule, and despite brutal persecution in the initial period, the Catholic church managed to maintain its organization free of official control. In recent years, moreover, Catholicism has drawn renewed strength as a result of a religious revival, particularly among youth, which the authorities have watched with growing concern.

Angry rumblings over the pope's proposed visit began to be heard. Belgrade's foremost weekly, *Nin*, openly objected to the prospect of Pope Paul II coming to Zagreb, Croatia's capital, to pray at the grave of Alojzije Stepinac, whom the Croats view as a national saint, but who was sentenced by the Yugoslav authorities in 1946 to sixteen years in prison as an alleged war criminal. Tito, however, in a shrewd statesman-like gesture, which set the stage for the subsequent improvement in Yugoslav-Vatican relations, allowed Stepinac to be buried in Zagreb cathedral on his death in 1960. The grave has ever since been a place of incessant pilgrimage.

Early in 1981, Jakov Blazevic, the prosecutor at Stepinac's staged trial, published a new book titled *The Sword, and Not Peace* in which he revived the old charges against Stepinac, such as that he had condoned the forced conversions to Catholicism of Orthodox Serbs and had collaborated with the wartime fascist regime in Croatia — charges that were categorically denied by Stepinac himself and a succession of popes from Pius XII to John XXIII.

Blazevic's renewed accusations against Stepinac and the

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church were given enormous publicity in the government-controlled press and on television, to which the mass circulation Catholic biweekly *Klas Koncila* (Voice of the Council) and the Catholic hierarchy returned categorical denials. On the anniversary of Stepinac's death, Vatican radio broadcast a strong defense of Stepinac by Franjo Cardinal Seper, Stepinac's successor in the Zagreb see, and in recent years a member of the Curia.

The battle was joined!

After this, a series of mutually unconnected occurrences and events served to escalate the conflict. A young priest named Vjekoslav Kujundzic, 27, was sentenced to fifty days in prison for alleged disrespect to Tito's memory, a sentence which was increased in October, by a higher court, to seven months in prison.

Then, last summer, six children from the Catholic region of Hercegovina reported seeing and talking to the Madonna above a meadow in Medjugorje mountain. Immediately the reported place of the Virgin's appearance became a place of mass pilgrimage. Tens of thousands of Catholics and even some Muslims and Communists trekked to Medjugorje (the Communists were subsequently expelled from the party). Reports of miraculous cures began to spread. An old man had regained his sight. A Muslim boy, totally paralyzed, is now hobbling about on crutches.

The Communist authorities took a dim view of these goings on, all the more so since the Madonna reportedly appeared near the place where Tito's Partisans during World War II had killed a large number of Croatian solders and had buried them in mass graves. The peasants round about started saying that this was a sign of the Virgin's favor in the Croat struggle for independence. The Yugoslav officials charged that the whole affair was invented by some politically-minded local priests and was part of a broader "clero-nationalist" conspiracy to incite Catholics against the regime.

Three local Hercegovinian priests have so far been sentenced in October and November: Jozo Zovko, 40, to three and a half years in jail, Ferdo Vlasic, 61, to eight years and Jozo Krizic to five years on charges of engaging in "enemy propaganda."

In the northern part of Croatia, in the area of Slavonia, the parish priest of St. Michael's church in the village of Strazeman was indicted together with an artist and a poet named Zlatko Tomicic. They were held responsible for the inclusion of the likeness of Cardinal Stepinac among the figures depicted in the newly installed windows of the refurbished church.

These are pieces of a far more general mosaic of strife in Yugoslavia. Leading Yugoslav officials threatened Archbishop Kuharic with imprisonment after he and a number of other clerics gave public support to a widespread appeal made by intellectuals all over Yugoslavia for the release of prisoners of conscience, of whom there are at least one-thousand according to Mihajlo Mihajlov, who had himself spent many years in jail as a political dissident, and who now teaches at Yale.

The intellectuals had also petitioned the government—and the church had supported their request—for the abrogation of penal code provisions making it a crime to criticize the Yugoslav regime and institutions. The response of the authorities was to prosecute several of the best known Croatian signers of these petitions, which are legal under the constitution.

After Tito's death things in Yugoslavia generally took a turn for the worse. The economic problems are intractable: inflation is currently running at a fifty percent annual rate; Yugoslavia's indebtedness to Western and international monetary institutions has topped $20 billion, an amount larger on a per capita basis than Poland's debt. Unemployment has passed one million, and production is down. And since March, 1981 the Albanian-inhabited region of Kosovo has been under a state of siege. In the clashes between Albanian demonstrators and the Yugoslav police and army units, hundreds have been killed and even larger numbers wounded or imprisoned.

Increasingly, feeling themselves threatened on all sides, Yugoslavia's weak and quarreling collective leadership has relied principally on the secret police and army to keep things under control, ignoring Talleyrand's wise admonition to Napoleon that one can do everything with bayonets except sit upon them. And things, in fact, have been getting worse internally and internationally. The repression and violence have already severely damaged Yugoslavia's image in the world. Leading West European publications such as *Der Spiegel,* the *Neue Zuercher Zeitung, Frankfurter Allgemeine, Die Welt, Corriere della Sera,* London's *Economist, Paris Match,* and others, have turned sharply critical of Yugoslavia, a fact which is already having a negative impact on badly needed tourism, and may adversely affect Western willingness to keep underwriting Yugoslavia's foundering economy.

Belgrade's policies cannot but cause serious embarrassment to the State Department which is strongly committed to "Yugoslavia's independence, political unity, and territorial integrity." In fact, Washington cannot but be uncomfortably aware of the yawning contradiction between its support of the Yugoslav *status quo* and America's human rights commitment which was strongly restated recently by Undersecretary of State William P. Clark and endorsed by Secretary of State Alexander Haig Jr.

As Mr. Clark put it, "Human rights is at the core of our foreign policy because it is central to what America is and stands for . . . We will never maintain wide public support for our foreign policy unless we can relate it to American ideals and to the defense of freedom. If a nation, friendly or not, abridges freedom, we should acknowledge it, stating that we regret and oppose it."

But it is precisely the State Department's selective and casuistic application of the human rights policy that has weakened its effectiveness and caused so much skepticism about its sincerity. A human rights policy cannot only be applied to the Soviet Union or Czechoslovakia, while gross violations of the rights of man in Chile, South Korea, El Salvador, or indeed in Egypt or in Yugoslavia are glossed over or totally ignored. MATTHEW MESTROVIC

(Matthew Mestrovic, a long-time contributor, teaches at Fairleigh Dickinson University in New Jersey.)

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Of several minds: *Thomas Powers*

ON NUCLEAR DISBELIEF

'MAYBE IT JUST WON'T HAPPEN'

I HAVE NEVER seen a nuclear weapon. But last spring I visited the Atomic Museum at Kirtland Air Force Base on the edge of Albuquerque, New Mexico, and saw a great many bomb casings. When you look at them your eye says *bomb!* but your mind says they are just hollow shells. The bomb guts are missing. Still, you get the idea. Some match your idea of what a bomb ought to look like—Fat Boy, for example, the 9000-pound bulbous monster which destroyed Hiroshima. The one in the Kirtland Atomic Museum is painted olive drab. The one at the Bradbury museum at Los Alamos is painted white. Both are grossly fat and thoroughly lethal in aspect.

But scariest of all is the Mark 17 bomb casing. According to the sign this was the first hydrogen or fusion or thermonuclear bomb which could actually be dropped from an aircraft, but it's hard to credit. It's hard to imagine anything could get it off the ground, short of a derrick. It is 21 feet long and five in diameter and it weighs 24 tons. But the numbers don't suggest the impression. The designer of the Atomic Museum had talent and a flair for the dramatic. The displays are in a great cavernlike hall, dramatically lit from below, and the Mark 17 looms up in the gloom like a . . . well, quite a lot like the great blue whale which hangs from the ceiling in the American Museum of Natural History. The thing is *so* huge, the casing is *so* massive you simply can't believe it could get off the ground. But like all the others it's hollow. It's not really a bomb at all, just a suggestion of the bomb, nothing more than a teaching aid.

At Vandenberg Air Force Base a year ago I saw a Mark 12-A re-entry vehicle, a black cone-shaped object, perhaps three feet high, with a carbon-carbon skin and a polished nose cone of specially heat-resistant alloys which erode away in the terrible heat and wind of re-entry at ten thousand miles an hour. It was sitting in a classroom where Air Force officers take an introductory course in ballistic missiles. One of the instructors began to rattle off statistics and then stopped abruptly. "Sir," he said, "what is your clearance?" I said I was a journalist and didn't have any sort of clearance. That was the end of the lecture. But I marveled at the RV all the same. It was so small, light and sleek. Is there any limit to human genius? Somehow the guts of the Mark 17 leviathan had been refined and reduced and squeezed into this neat package a couple of men might cart off in a wheelbarrow.

So I've never really seen a bomb—just drawings, photographs, and the outer skins of bombs. Most people haven't seen the skins. For us the bomb is a purely mental thing, an abstract concept, a kind of pocket of anxiety in the mind. I *know* the New York City subway system is going through hard times because I ride it every day. I *know* the price of gasoline is up. The sting in my eyes tells me Los Angeles has an air pollution problem. No one has to tell me that blacks and Puerto Ricans live in a different world because I brush their alien shoulders on the city's streets. Things physically present announce themselves unmistakably, but the bomb is like the knowledge of death. It comes and goes, a kind of mood. A story in the paper, or a siren late at night, can bring it heaving up out of the unconscious part of the mind. But then it sinks back, like other things we know but can't bear to think about.

In the last two years I've talked to a lot of military people about nuclear weapons, strategic policy, what the Russians are up to, and the like. For the most part, they have been an impressive group of men—sober, intelligent, knowledgeable, and orderly in their habits of mind. They did not seem at all warlike. Nothing they said suggests that the defense of the United States is in careless or reckless hands. The motto of the Strategic Air Command, which has authority over bombers and land-based intercontinental ballistic missiles, is "Peace is our Profession." As I remember it's carved on the lintel over the main entrance to SAC headquarters at Offut Air Force Base near Omaha. This is the sort of thing to invite a bitter smile, everything considered, but so far as I could tell, SAC people take it seriously. I asked a colonel at Offut if he thought the ICBMs would ever be launched, and he said no—they *all* say no—and added, "If that happened we would have failed in our job." It's tempting to poke ironic fun at such earnest remarks, but it wouldn't be fair. The officer wasn't being smarmy. He really meant it. His job was preventing wars, not winning them.

The military men involved in nuclear weapons policy—and their civilian colleagues, too, for that matter—don't believe it's ever going to happen. For them, I suspect, no belief is deeper and stronger. Their assurances on this point have none of the tinny quality of budget officials, say, telling you the federal deficit will disappear in 1984, when they know full well this barely qualifies as even an honest hope.

When you think about it, the equanimity of military people makes perfect sense. They know the United States and the Soviet Union have got 15,000 strategic nuclear weapons between them. They've been trying to figure out a way to fight a genuinely limited nuclear war for thirty years, and haven't come up with anything convincing yet. They know the Pentagon periodically tries to plan for the post-attack world but always throws up its hands in despair because there is simply no way of projecting how bad it would be. The destruction would be too general. The normal means of recovery and reconstruction would be threatened in too many ways to calculate.

Take transportation. Airfields, ports, railway marshaling yards, and major

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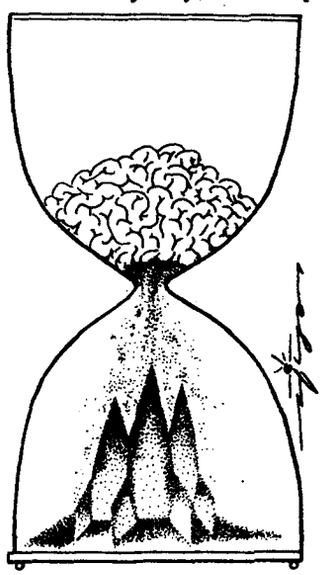
highway intersections would be destroyed. Aircraft, ships, rolling stock and large numbers of busses, trucks, and cars would be destroyed. Many of the factories which might build more would be destroyed. If factories remained, the workers might be dead or too sick to work. The breakdown in transportation would make it hard to feed or care for them. Power lines would be out. Most petroleum refineries would have been destroyed, fuel would be in short supply, and the little remaining would be hard to distribute. And so on and so forth. How can you predict how long it would take to get things moving again when so many factors are involved, which overlap in so many ways? The answer is you can't. The government goes on churning out civil defense and reconstruction plans, but the Pentagon has never made a serious official guess how well they would work—or even if they would work at all—because the computers can't factor in all the variables.

This is the sort of thing military men know, generally in great detail, and none of it is encouraging where the subject of nuclear war is concerned. On top of that, they *know* we shall never get rid of nuclear weapons. Arms agreements *may*—even that is in doubt—limit their number and type, but disarmament is not on the horizon. It is not *over* the horizon. When you put these two things together—knowledge of what nuclear weapons can do, and a conviction we shall always have them—you can see why military men tell themselves, and everybody else, the bombs will never be used. They are flesh and blood, after all. Their wives and children all live in target areas. They can't *bear* to think anything else.

IT'S DIFFICULT to remember how I thought about things a couple of years ago, when I first started to read seriously about nuclear weapons. A lot of things came as a shock then which seem familiar now. I made lots of errors in writing about the subject. Once, for example, I wrote that the bomb dropped on Nagasaki was the last one in the American inventory. In late August, 1945, I thought, there were no bombs in the world at all. But later the man who assembled the core for the fourth bomb told me I was wrong.

After two or three months of reading I went through a period of intense sadness. At first I didn't know what it was. I thought the source might be worry about my father, who is 89, or a friend whose marriage was breaking up, or chronic financial anxiety, or something else of the kind. Then I told myself I was an idiot. Of *course* I was sad. I had finally schooled myself in the numbers and knew for the first time that we *really had* built weapons enough to break the back of our civilization. I'd gotten the details straight about radiation sickness, theories of war-fighting which all imply any nuclear war will go the limit, the steady march of technical improvement in weapons design which makes military people so jumpy, and so on and so forth. I had read or been told *nothing* which suggested we were going to learn to get along without these weapons. It was quite clear, in fact, that we were going to go on pointing them at enemies until we used them or the world came to an end. Since the news on the geological front is all good, and the planet can expect to survive another couple of billion years, that meant, as a practical matter, we would go on as we were until we used them. In short, it seemed to me as clear as night follows day that it is going to happen.

But everybody I talked to took the contrary view. Everybody, that is, professionally involved in defense matters. Ordinary citizens often entertain foreboding of the darkest sort. In a quite matter of fact way they will say, "What else were they built for?" Defense community people *never* say that. What they say is, "It doesn't make sense. There is nothing to be gained. No rational man would ever use nuclear weapons. They can serve no useful purpose in war."



That, of course, is true enough. But does that mean they won't be used? You might have said all those things about the great armies of Europe in 1914. Indeed, people did say them. Reasons for not using nuclear weapons are also reasons for not having them. Citing the litany of their horrors is an argument against their possession or use, not an argument we won't use them—given we have them. Such arguments are really an expression of hope, and we depend on hope because there is nothing else. I have heard dozens of defense people explain why nuclear weapons will bever be used. I have *never* heard a note of fear or despair. Their confidence is sunny and unshakable. If we just stick to our guns and make sure we've got a weapon for every weapon they've got, then there's nothing to worry about. There is a soothing quality to these reassurances, as if we were being told that airplanes really do work, and it's safe to fly.

But now comes the curious thing. After a year or two of seeing things in this light, for the first time I feel the tug the other way. I find myself wondering if perhaps the military men aren't right after all. They say it would be crazy, and are absolutely right. We worry about so many things that fail to come to pass. Two hundred years ago Malthus was worrying that the world's population had already stretched the planet's resources to the groaning limit. Maybe fear of nuclear weapons is enough to keep everyone sober and cautious. Maybe the only danger is falling behind, just as the Pentagon says. Maybe all those people in Washington are right, and I'm wrong. I devoutly hope they are right. Maybe it just won't happen.

This is a mood I'm describing, not really an argument. I don't believe it for a minute.

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The problem is disbelief. An argument is the ephemeral stuff of the mind. It has no solidity. It surrenders to the world, over time, and the world tells us tomorrow will be much like today. It is a considerable undertaking to go out and see the Air Force bases and atomic laboratories and missile-launching centers. But even there the note of the lethal is missing. The bomb casings are all hollow. The missiles are all mock-ups used as teaching aids. The military men work eight to four and go home to their families. Nobody shows any sign of fear. Everything suggests tomorrow will be much like today.

We know we are mortal but we don't feel mortal and we live, generally, as if there were plenty of time for everything. The moments of recognition are few and they fade. We know that nothing lasts, nations die, the continents move, atmosphere whirls off into space, suns burn out—but not here, now, to us. These things we can't believe. It is the same with the missiles in their silos. We know what they will do. Most people don't even have to be told. They *know*. But knowing and believing are very different things. The world has its disconcerting way of going on from day to day, just as if nothing were ever to change. Belief is frail and fades away.

The people in the defense community have all had their ghastly moments, from the president on down to the missile-launch control officers reading paperback novels in their steel cubicles suspended on springs forty feet beneath the Great Plains. Every last one of them, I am convinced, has looked it in the eye at one time or another. Even Nikita Khrushchev had his dark moment. He once told the Egyptian journalist, Mohammed Heikal, "When I was appointed First Secretary of the Central Committee and learned all the facts about nuclear power I couldn't sleep for several days. Then I became convinced that we could never possibly use these weapons, and when I realized that I was able to sleep again." Thus we all go on, sustained by disbelief.

THOMAS POWERS

Of several minds: *John Garvey*

CHOICE AS ABSOLUTE

THE HIGHEST MORALITY?

THIS COLUMN is not about abortion. I have to make that clear because it begins with some language which showed up in an ad sponsored by the Religious Coalition for Abortion Rights, an ad with which I disagree, but my disagreement with the ad and its sponsors isn't the main point here. What I am interested in is the way the assumptions we make about what it means to be human can show up where we don't expect to meet them, like plants which thrust through the pavement or grow in gutters at the tops of buildings. Rhetoric is meant to convince, to seem inarguably right; it grabs you by the lapels. In this debate and in many others one form of rhetoric meets another. The anti-abortion people call themselves pro-life, and who can oppose them? No one wants to be anti-life. Their opponents call themselves pro-choice — and who wants to be anti-choice? But the structure of an argument can't help revealing the assumptions of its maker, and the language in this ad reveals assumptions which are fascinating.

What caught my eye was a couple of sentences — or rather, a sentence and sentence fragment, since the ad is written in a style I first noticed in old Volkswagen ads, where a sentence is followed by brief non-sentences, something like this: "You'll like it. Because it's built right. The way you want it." The emphysemic style doesn't make the thought behind the sentence and its trailing fragments necessarily wrong, but in this case the device underscored precisely the arguable assumption. This is what the ad said: "We believe abortion is an individual decision. And therefore your God-given right."

Therefore? Unless God or language doesn't matter, this is nonsense. Think of some of the changes that might be rung on that sentence: "We believe that child-abuse is an individual decision. And therefore your God-given right." Pro-abortion people would say that because child-abuse involves another individual it is not really an individual decision, but that is exactly the point anti-abortion people want to make; the item at the other end of the decision to abort is not a thing. Never mind, for now. What is fascinating here is what the language really says: because something is an individual decision — as any decision made by any individual is — it is therefore a *right*, even one which has divine sanction. Choice itself is elevated; the very fact that a choice can be made is seen as a thing to be celebrated. And there is something to this. This is what I mean when I say that a pervasive assumption shows through the rhetoric here and reveals a larger, important pattern.

I was talking to a woman who was taking a course on thanatology (the word, stripped to its roots, means talk about death) and she was excited by an idea she had encountered in her reading. There ought to be places, she felt, where people could go to commit an "ethical suicide," places where people could end their lives with professional help and without the feeling of guilt. My first reaction to this idea was that I could imagine nothing more desolate than the prospect of looking into the basset-hound eyes of a professional sympathizer during my final moments, and I began to think of the times when I had longed for death — hangovers and long sermons leapt to mind. But I knew that this was making light of an important problem: what about the hard cases, the people whose lives are a continual suffering? Some long and difficult deaths may be exemplary; others are only ugly and seem to mean nothing but pain. What about

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those who are simply tired of living? Rex Stout, author of the Nero Wolfe books, told an interviewer that his life had been long and good, but he was tired of it. He said that he would like to kill himself, but his relatives wouldn't understand it. As a relatively young man who feels pretty good I can understand what he meant only in an abstract sort of way. But I do find something repellent in the idea of voluntary death chambers for people who decide that they should die, and I tried to tell her what bothered me: maybe suffering has meaning, and our human work is not to impose our own wills on our lives, but to accept what happens to us and try to listen to it, learn from it — this is lame, I know, especially when it comes from someone who is not suffering. But I was also bothered by the fact that a young woman who was every bit as much in the pink as I am was so enthusiastic about the idea of suicide. When I said that even suffering might have some meaning, something to teach us, she said, "Well, dying is a choice. You have a right to make a choice."

The abortion ad and this belief in the right to suicide both assume that choice is not only morally important; choice in itself is made the highest morality. If it can be chosen, it should be permitted. What matters is not what is chosen, but the act of choosing itself.

There is something wrong with this, but also something right. Choice is the thing that makes us human. It is the implications of human freedom which humans most fear, as Dostoevsky shows in *The Grand Inquisitor*; people are eager to avoid those implications. Our freedom is terrifying, and essential. This is the special insight of the modern West, and it is connected with such issues as suicide. In *The Myth of Sisyphus* Camus calls suicide the most important philosophical question. If life is not worth living, if it is meaningless, suicide is consistent with that discovery.

There has been a shift in our perception of freedom of choice and its exercise. At the turn of the century morals were regulated much more strictly than they are today, but manufacturers were quite free to dump poisons into the air and water. The glorious age of capitalism, when poor children could be forced into labor and pollution was the free choice of the plant manager, was finally limited by the community, which realized that some choices are destructive.

Not all choices are equal, obviously. It doesn't matter that we didn't know the damage pollution would do; we live with the consequences of our choice to pollute. But we assume that the area of morality is the only one in the world in which all choices are equally valid.

The moral area is one which is wisely left rather open-ended where legislation is concerned, because in a pluralistic society there is the danger that a dominant ideology or religion will use the power of law to impose its views on people who do not accept them willingly. It is wise to legislate as little as possible. But many of us have come to believe that what is legal is moral, and what is not forbidden is therefore ethically acceptable. This is crazy, but it is one of democracy's weird side effects. Another, related to it, is the belief that all ideas and choices are equal, an idea as shallow as the belief that the will of the majority is always correct and must not be opposed. As a negative insight democracy makes great sense; it keeps some of the most heavy-handed forms of tyranny from taking over completely. As a positive ideology it can be poisonous. It is one thing to say that a person has a legal right to hold whatever stupid ideas he or she wants to hold, because the alternative to allowing this freedom is politically dangerous. It is quite another thing to say that all ideas and choices are in fact equal. We do not make that assumption with regard to pollution, or military spending. Because the results of moral decisions are not easily measured and may forever escape measurement, we act as if they were therefore less real, less important. There is a crude way of assuming that "objective" (i.e., easily quantifiable) data are more real than other data. But there are haunting signs of the limits to this attitude. There are studies, for example, which show that children raised in institutions, without much individual attention or love, are both physically and mentally less developed than other children. This could be seen as an indication that love, which cannot be measured, is nevertheless as real a force as gravity.

Of course you have the right to make choices. But some important questions go along with this: do you have a right to make absolutely any choice at all? Suicide? Abortion? Infanticide? Stupor? At one level, which may or may not be legal (depending on the state's mood) you do, of course. But the questions which are constantly avoided are these: how should we live? Is it good to choose such and such a course? Is it wise? Does it make sense in the light of the fact that we will someday die? If there is a meaning to the fact of our being alive and sentient, will we have blown it if our choices are stupid ones? And, given the right we have to make choices, isn't it possible for us to make truly stupid, wrong-headed, even terrible decisions? Will we be free — as a community, as well as individually — of the consequences of having made our choices? What the law should or should not permit has been made the central feature of a debate which ought to have another focus. What law ought to do is not irrelevant, but spending all of our energy on law is something like worrying about the plumbing, while assuming that a building's architecture will take care of itself.

If there are forces and patterns of meaning which we must discover in order to be human, our culture not only does nothing to encourage our exploring that posssibility — it positively discourages it as a serious consideration. Where choice alone is enough, where choice is the ultimate moral category, all of the ways which might be chosen are seen as equal — and equally unimportant.

JOHN GARVEY

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Coming to terms with Mary

MARY GORDON

QUEENS in the nineteen sixties had almost as many Catholic high schools as bakeries. Towards the spring of the year, the approach of Senior Proms meant big business for the local merchants. There was one store—which girls in my school were urged to patronize—that had a special section devoted to what were called "Mary-like gowns." The Mary-like gown was an invention of nuns and a coalition of sodalists, and its intent, I think, was to make prom dresses as much like habits as possible. We used to go and try the dresses on for a laugh. They were unbelievably ugly. The yardage of material could have dressed even an Irish family for a year. Nobody I or my friends ever talked to would wear them. We always figured that people who bought prom dresses like that were going to the prom with their cousins. For the purpose of them was to conceal the body, to underplay as much as possible, the natural allure of young female flesh.

In my day, Mary was a stick to beat smart girls with. Her example was held up constantly: an example of silence, of subordination, of the pleasure of taking the back seat. With the kind of smile they would give to the behavior of Margaret the wife in "Father Knows Best," they talked about the one assertion of Mary's recorded in the Gospel: her request at the wedding feast at Cana. It was noted that she didn't ask her son directly for anything; she merely said: "They have no wine." Making him think it was his decision. Not suggesting it was her idea, no, nothing like that. Then disappearing, once again, into the background, into silence.

For women like me, it was necessary to reject that image of Mary in order to hold onto the fragile hope of intellectual achievement, independence of identity, sexual fulfillment. Yet we were offered no alternative to this Marian image; hence, we were denied a potent female image whose application was universal. There were a few saints one could, in desperation, turn to: Theresa of Avila, who was reported to have a fresh mouth (If this is the way you treat your friends, Lord, what do you do to your enemies? Henny Youngman in Carmel. Who wouldn't like her?), talked back to bishops, reformed her order, had visions whose power and authenticity were unassailable. But any saint, however celebrated, is venerated out of choice, only by some. The appeal of Mary is that devotion to her is universal, ancient. And she is the mother of God.

Women who were independent and intelligent rejected the Virgin Mary in favor of her son in the way that some feminists, particularly in the beginning of the movement, felt it necessary to radically reject those things that were associated exclusively with the female: dresses, make-up, domestic work, relations with men, children. But life has changed. The most interesting and sophisticated thought by feminists now sees that in rejecting those things that were traditionally thought of as female, we are going with the male system of values that rates them as inferior. What we are doing now is trying to salvage the valuable things that the past ascribed to females, and to say that, if they are valuable, why reserve them to only 53 percent of the human race? It is this impulse to re-examine and to understand in a deeper way the history of women, female genius, female work, often anonymous, hidden, uncredited, to look for new values that are not simply male values dressed for success, that is leading women back to Mary.

BUT THERE is still a problem. Most of what we know about Mary we know from men. Much of the thought about her has been poisoned by misogyny, and a hatred of the body, particularly female sexuality. The Fathers did not like women—and in setting Mary apart from the rest of the female sex what they were saying was that she was only acceptable because she did not share the corruption that was inevitably attached to the female condition. In an ancient and popular symmetry, the image of Mary as the second Eve has been present in Marian thought from earliest times. In talking about Eve, the early writers gave vent to their disgust for sex, and for female sexuality in general. Consider Tertullian. "Do you not realize, Eve, that it is you? The curse God pronounced on your

MARY GORDON *is the author of* Final Payments *and* The Company of Women *(Random House)*.

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sex weighs still on the world. Guiltily, you must bear its hardships. You are the devil's gateway, you desecrated the fatal tree, you first betrayed the law of God, you softened up with your cajoling words the man against whom the devil could not prevail by force."

The tradition suggests that Eve, is *cursed* to bear children, rather than being *blessed* with motherhood. Augustine refers to the "feces and urine" of childbirth. In the sixth century, Venantius Fortunatus writes, "Happy virgin . . . she does not weigh down sluggish limbs with an imprisoned embryo; she is not depressed and worn out by its awkward weight." In the seventeenth century, St. Jean Eudes writes, touching on the unbaptized fetus as the victim of original sin, "It is a subject of humiliation of all the mothers of the children of Adam to know that while they are with child, they carry with them an infant . . . who is the enemy of God, the object if his hatred and malediction, and the shrine of the demon."

The identification of women with the flesh, men with the spirit, was a commonplace of ancient thought, and thinkers about women have used this idea to depict woman as inevitably lower—by virtue of her physical existence—than men. St Jerome informs us: "As long as a woman is for birth and children, she is different from man as body is from soul. But when she wishes to serve Christ more than the world, then she will cease to be a woman, and will be called man." St. John Chrysostom, speaking of women's physical nature, opines; "The whole of her bodily beauty is nothing less than phlegm, blood, bile, rheum, and the fluid of digested food . . . If you consider what is stored up behind those lovely eyes, the angle of the nose, the mouth and cheeks you will agree that the well-proportioned body is merely a whitened sepulcher."

Woman does not have to be sexually active to be threatening and disgusting; the threat and the horror are inherent in her physical nature. It is difficult to understand the transition between this disgust-filled thinking about woman and the veneration accorded to the Virgin Mary. What hope is there for the rest of us, who eat, breathe, menstruate, make love, bear children? How do we bridge the gap between ordinary woman, that repository of phlegm, bile, rheum and the fluid of digested food, and the Tower of Ivory, the House of Gold, the "floures floure," the one of whom the twelfth century poet says: "Your breasts are as fragrant as wine; their whiteness whiter than milk and lilies; their scent lovelier than flowers and balsam wood."

WE MUST BEGIN by the radical and frightening understanding that the history of human thought about women has been a history of error. Christianity is not unique in this error; it is possible to say that its ideas about women are slightly more humane than those of many groups in history. For a woman to try to take her place in any tradition, taking seriously that tradition's history, the only option is a forgiving vigilance. One must forgive, or one must give up history; one must be vigilant to ensure that the tendencies so inbred in all human beings—ourselves as well as men—are passed on as little as possible. For they are in all of us, blood and bone; we cannot expect them to disappear in a lifetime. Those of us whose hearts are moved by those who have gone before us, who wish to keep the connection with them alive, must reject the temptation of historical romanticism. We must not forget the history of woman has been a history of degredation, oppression, the idealization whose other side is tyranny. But we must resist as well the temptation to reject the lovely, the exalted, the resonant life built up for centuries by living men and women.

I have wanted to create for myself a devotion to Mary that honors her as woman, as mother, that rejects the wickedness of sexual hatred and sexual fear. I wanted this particularly as I grew older; I longed for it with a special poignance as I experienced motherhood for the first time. It has come to me, then, that one must sift through the nonsense and hostility that has characterized thought and writing about Mary, to find some images, shards, and fragments, glittering in the rubble. One must find isolated words, isolated images; one must travel the road of metaphor, of icon, to come back to that figure who, throughout a corrupt history, has moved the hearts of men and women, has triumphed over the hatred of woman and the fear of her, and abides shining, worthy of our love, compelling it.

I have chosen three qualities in my thoughts about her: innocence, grief, and glory. I offer here, no system, but a set of meditations. I offer no final words, since, for a woman to come to terms with this woman who endures beloved despite a history of hatred, she must move lightly and discard freely; she must take upon herself the ancient labor of women: she must become a gatherer, a hoarder. She must put out for those around her scattered treasure, isolates without a pattern whose accumulated meaning comes from the relations of proximity.

II

INNOCENCE, GRIEF, GLORY: they are potent words, ideas, and like all human things that take on power are susceptible to perversion and corruption. The beautiful idea of innocence can be perverted, in the face of a generalized hostility to female power, to an ideal of subservience, of a loss of individual identity and autonomy, of an enforced childishness which barters the responsibilities of freedom for the privileges of a protected object. But the ideal of innocence has nothing to do with weakness. On the contrary, real innocence is capable of understanding and confronting evil in its most radical terms: it is undeceived about the Powers of Darkness, and does not confuse them with human frailty; it never forgets compassion.

Innocence: it is a rare and a powerful quality; it is not the failure of the imagination to imagine wrong, but the naturally bestowed inability to choose malice, selfishness. It is the inborn lack of that instinct to touch others for their harm; the absence of the desire to inflict pain. Mary embodies our love for this instinctive purity of life. I imagine her in one of Leonardo's Annunciations covered over with light, sure in her youthful self-knowledge. Humble—"Behold the handmaid of the Lord"—yet never cringing, always aware of the great dignity of her position: "All generations shall call me blessed." Her consent asked for by God, not enforced. Innocence suggests an

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inviolable goodness, not striven after, but lavishly and freely given. Hence we value it. It is not the virtue some of us struggle a lifetime trying to attain. It is a kind of luck. Grace, we call it. The love of innocence is the celebration of grace.

I call up more images. A sixteenth century sculpture I saw in Winchester Cathedral. Mary the young girl looks amused. Her mouth, a thin indentured curve, turns up with pleasure. Her downcast eyes show what might be fear, but finally is not, but only an inward looking, an understanding, wary, perhaps, but not overwhelmed. I think of the curve of the body of a thirteenth century statue of the young Mother with her child. At ease in its own nature, swaying almost with the rhythms of maternal love, ready for life, radically open to experience, to love.

This radical openness is what Karl Rahner sees as the importance of the idea of virginity for Christians regardless of their sexual vocation. "This attitude of expectation, of readiness and receptivity to grace, this awareness that the ultimate thing is grace and grace alone, is something which, as an attitude of mind every Christian must have, even if it does not find concrete expression in virginity."

I think of the young woman in Fra Angelico's Annunciation; thunderstruck from the force of the Angel's entrance, serene, and pleased. I remember the face of the young Mary in Pasolini's Gospel According to St. Matthew. A sensual girl, her wide mouth turned up in a smile of comprehending expectation. A girl of the Middle East, of the warm air of a temperate climate, picking fruit, walking on warm nights under stars we can no longer in the modern world imagine.

Yet these images have nothing to do with the false images of innocence used in our culture to sell everything from designer jeans to membership in the Moral Majority. Contrast the image of the girl in Pasolini's movie, of Fra Angelico's virgin, of the thirteenth century young mother, the sensual curve of her hip ready for motion—contrast these images with the image of a young woman in Jerry Falwell's school. The sureness of the young Mary is a sureness born of grace; it is a sureness that never excludes understanding of human suffering, that does not assert with every flick of its coiffed head, the exclusive rightness of its position. It is an innocence that is rooted in the love of the physical world. It is an innocence saddened by much, surprised at nothing. It is an innocence that knows it will be pierced by a sword, ground under by great scandal of an unjust world. It is an innocence that lives with the knowledge of its own impending grief.

THE GRIEVING MOTHER. *Mater Dolorosa*. The second word I think about is grief. I note that in our culture, fixated as it is on youth, there are far fewer images of the sorrowing mother who would have to be at least middle-aged, than of the young virgin with child. I listen to Pergolesi's *Stabat Mater*. A mature grief, grief rescued from the danger of madness, not Clytemnestra raging, vengeful over her lost child, but a mother silenced by sorrow. Only in the heart, the great music of a resignation that is anything but a flat giving in: a lifting of the heart to God in the face of the absurd. The death of one's child. It is, for many of us, the worst we can imagine, the greatest stumbling block to faith. To witness the ignominious death of one's most innocent child! In Mary we have the emblem of all human sorrow, innocence victimized by injustice, by the incomprehensible exigencies of the cruel God who is the God of love. I see her overcome with grief, swooning from the violence of the blows of God, her Father and her Son, in Grünewald's rendering of the Sorrowing Mother. For this woman, there is no comfort. The heart pierced with the sword, now open to the world. The sweet compassion of the innocent girl deepened beyond our comprehension. Spared nothing. We bring to her the scandal of the fallen world; we give our despair, the failure of all human consolation to assuage us.

I SEE BELLINI'S PIETA. The Virgin is bent over the dead body of her Son. But behind her, the winter landscape blossoms with the first flowers of spring. She is the mother of the Resurrected Christ; that too is in her fate as she lies holding her dead child. We can, in a romantic love of suffering, fixate on the Sorrowing Virgin, perverting even that image in the belief that we are facing the true nature of life. But for a Christian, the final nature of life is triumphant. Christ rises from the dead: his mother takes her place beside him at the Throne of God.

Triumph. How easily that too can be perverted to the triumphalism that attaches to the Queenship of Mary when the church sees itself politically beleaguered, in danger of losing its power on earth. Marina Warner notes: "In times of stasis and entrenchment, as under Popes Pius XII and to some extent Paul VI, veneration of the Virgin is encouraged, and in times of strong ecumenism and change, when the church is less self-righteous and assured, devotion to the Virgin, especially under her triumphant aspect, is restrained and declines." What can we make of this? The image of the woman brought out as a weapon to threaten the rebellious? Yes, of course, if we confuse the Queenship of Mary with a human rule whose first goal is to keep everyone in line. But how ridiculous. The triumph of Mary is beyond law, and lawlessness; the notion of disobedience is a paltry irrelevance if one imagines choirs of angels and the mother of God enthroned, not above her children, but in the midst of them, their voices raised in a harmony impossible to them in their life on earth. I see gold and ivory; I imagine the music of Handel, Alexander's Feast. The Mother

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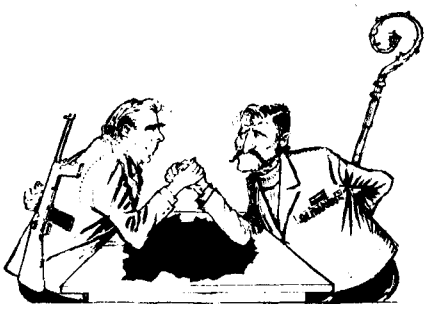
of God is the Queen of Heaven; she presides over a feast, secure that all her children are, at last, well fed.

III

IN THE END, it is beyond reason, beyond argument. In the end, the devotion to Mary is the objective correlative of all the primitive desires that lead human beings to the life of faith. She embodies our desire to be fully human yet to transcend death. The hatred of women is the legacy of death; in Mary, Mother and Queen, we see, enfleshed in a human form that touches our most ancient longings, the promise of salvation, of deliverance, through flesh, from the burdens of flesh. As Hopkins says:

If I have understood,
She holds high motherhood
Toward all our ghostly good
And plays in grace her part
About man's beating heart,
Laying, like air's fine flood,
The deathdance in his blood.

I think, finally, it is through poetry, through painting, sculpture, music, through those human works that are magnificently innocent of the terrible strain of sexual hatred by virtue of the labor, craft, and genius of their great creators, that one finds the surest way back to the Mother of God.



GOD AND CAESAR IN POLAND

Solidarity & the church

DENIS MacSHANE

Editor's note: Since the imposition of martial law on Poland, the church there has called for national unity and the avoidance of bloodshed; has defended Solidarity and "the democratic renewal" that it had begun; and has demanded the liberation of arrested Poles and an end to the inhumane conditions of imprisonment. Although the church warned Poles away from violent resistance (as did, reportedly, Solidarity leader Lech Walesa), the martial-law government has failed in its attempts to win even passive support from the Catholic leaders. The following article, written well before the most recent, tragic turn of events, is published here, not only as a poignant reminder of what has been, but also as important background to what may yet be.

SNOW FELL and the temperature was minus twenty degrees centigrade as the crowds gathered for Mass at four o'clock in the afternoon in Walbrzych's main church one Thursday in December 1980. Walbrzych is one of the coal-rich areas of Silesia. The rugged hilly terrain is not unlike South Wales, though the Walbrzych miners boast that difficult as their coal is to extract from the awkward seams, it is the highest quality coking anthracite and coking coal to be found anywhere in the world. Now on December 4, 1980, they had taken the day off and were coming to Mass. December 4 is St. Barbara's Day, and St. Barbara is the patron saint of Polish miners. Just as the early Christian church absorbed pagan feasts and turned them into religious festivals like Christmas, so the postwar rulers of Poland took a religious day like December 4, St. Barbara's day, and made it an official miners' holiday when festivals and feasts were laid on by the old official miners' union. Regional or even national figures would come to Silesia to award labor medals and make speeches about the need for greater productivity in the pits.

The creation of Solidarity meant that for the first time since the war the miners of Walbrzych were able to celebrate their patron saint's day in a traditional religious fashion. The high ceilinged redbrick church was crammed with miners, their families, and the local townspeople. Outside, in the freezing cold, the local miners' chairman chatted with Jan Litynski, a KOR member and an editor of *Robotnik*, who had been in Walbrzych advising the miners since they broke away from the old union and set up a regional Solidarity organization in September 1980. Inside, High Mass was being said by the Archbishop of Wroclaw, who preached a sermon invoking the Polish struggle for independence against the Russians in the nineteenth century. He recalled the steadfast "solidarity" of St. Barbara, who died rather than forswear her faith. He gave thanks to present-day Solidarity and urged parents to teach their children the Polish traditions. The Mass finished on a lighthearted note as a miner, dressed in the traditional black costume of Silesia, chatted on the altar with the archbishop and even exchanged his hat with its large white feathers for the archbishop's miter.

As the packed church sang the great and (even to atheistic ears) moving, Polish hymn, *Boze cos Polske (God who has*

DENIS MacSHANE *is on the staff of the International Metalworkers' Federation, Geneva branch. This article is an excerpt from his book,* Solidarity: Poland's Independent Trade Union *(Spokesman, Notting) Copyright ©1981 Denis MacShane.*

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protected Poland) — perhaps the only other hymn that touches *Boze cos Polske* for national-religious intensity is to hear *Faith of Our Fathers* sung by Irish Catholics in Ulster — a procession of miners dressed in their black costumes wound its way through the church. Each pit was represented with its flag. On the flag of the Maurice Thorez (the former French Communist Party leader) pit there was firmly pinned a large Solidarity badge. On the breasts of the miners, intermingled with war or labor-productivity medals, were little red and white Solidarity badges. Each group of miners carried a small statue of St. Barbara which had been blessed by the archbishop, and would be placed in each pit. As the procession, with flags held high, wound its way into the streets of Walbrzych, people's eyes were wet, as different emotions — religious, nationalist, and defiance for those who had prevented the celebration of St. Barbara's day as a religious feast during the past thirty years — could be seen almost visibly surging through the minds of the thousands of Poles present.

FROM THE VERY beginning of the Gdansk strike, the imagery of the church was everywhere. On the railings of the Lenin Shipyard workers hung big color photographs of Pope John Paul II. Walesa always had a badge with the picture of the Black Virgin of Czestochowa pinned on his lapel. High on the list of twenty-one demands was that the church should be allowed to broadcast Mass on State radio. The conference hall where the Inter-Factory Strike Committee met had a crucifix behind the platform. Three days into the strike, when workers were hesitant about staying on to occupy the shipyard, once the initial demands over more money and Anna Walentynowicz's reinstatement had been met, the strike organizers persuaded a Gdansk priest to come and say Sunday Mass (against his bishop's wishes) for the occupying shipyard workers and so stop them from drifting home.

Since the strike, the church's, at least symbolic, presence is everywhere. No Solidarity office is complete without a crucifix and portraits of Pope John Paul II. Major Solidarity public ceremonies, like the unveiling of the monuments to the workers killed in 1970, or Solidarity's May 3 celebrations, have religious services woven into them. Western magazines seem to have published as many pictures of Walesa on his knees in church as they have of him addressing workers. Editorial writers in many Western papers have talked of Solidarity almost as if it were under the church's control. Yet at the same time Solidarity can publish an official document about itself which is intended for distribution to trade unions outside Poland which categorially states that the union "identifies itself with no ideology and no religion. It is true that among the union symbols those of the Catholic religion are of great consequence. This reflects the respect which society, most of the people being Catholic, has for the moral authority of the church. But the union itself, as a social movement, is secular, it acknowledges the Christian values to be the foundation of European culture, but it is not politically related to the church, nor does it consider the Catholic social doctrine to be its program."

The worldwide importance of what has been happening inside Poland since August 1980 is because it constitutes a major victory for the working class. The fact that Polish workers are all baptized, and for the most part practicing, Catholics, and that Solidarity's ceremonial involvement with the church is so obvious should not blind one to the fact that Solidarity operates quite independently of the church. That is not to say that Solidarity's national and regional leaders do not meet with cardinals, archbishops, bishops and priests, and listen to what they have to say with a greater degree of moral respect than when they have to listen to lay intellectuals. One should not confuse paying spiritual leaders moral respect with taking orders from them. Priests do not attend National Co-ordinating Commissions, though Cardinal Wyszynski's senior lay adviser, Professor Kukulowicz, attended some National Co-ordinating Commission sessions; nor are bishops members of regional praesidiums. There is not a single recorded incident in which the intervention of a church leader has made any critical difference to a Solidarity decision. The church's caution first manifested itself during the Gdansk strike and has continued ever since. But this moderation fully corresponds to the political analysis of some Solidarity leaders who need no urging from the church to stop certain types of strike, or to curtail more provocative demands. It is not necessary to be a Catholic to be a moderate, nor do decisions to call off general strikes (such as the one threatened over the Bydgoszcz incident) reflect undue church influence, so much as majority decisions taken after long debate by Solidarity's leadership, which is quite capable of making up its own mind, based on the available evidence.

Yet at the same time there is convincing evidence for arguing that without the church, and, in particular, without the example set by the church in how to resist incorporation by a one-party State, Solidarity could not have come into existence. The historical importance of the church in keeping the Polish culture and national identity alive during the long years when Poland was divided and ruled by the great empires of Central Europe — Russia, Germany, and Austria-Hungary — is undeniable. As in Ireland under British rule, the church offered a spiritual national identity that provided solace to a people whose political self-expression was denied by the foreign occupier.

It is no accident that Ireland and Poland are Europe's most intensely practicing Catholic countries with no substantial anti-clerical politics that developed in other Catholic countries like France and Spain, where the church was long seen as part of the governing establishment, rather than the champion of national self-identity. For thirty years the primate of Poland, Cardinal Stefan Wyszynski, represented for many Poles the enduring symbol of their country's difference, and its refusal to be subjected to Soviet hegemony. The 250,000 Poles who turned out for his funeral in Warsaw indicate the support he had. The Communist rulers of Poland provided the Catholics with something approaching the figure of a martyr through their early persecution and imprisonment of Wyszynski.

There are now three times as many priests as in pre-war

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Poland. If you drive through many of Poland's poorest villages you will see a well-built church in the midst of the rural poverty. Yet the Polish church cannot occupy itself with two of the main social concerns of the Catholic church in the non-Communist world — the control of female fertility and children's education. Birth control and abortion more or less on demand are generally available in Poland and, whatever the church's teaching, they are freely taken up.

The State has complete control of education from the kindergarten upwards, though the church runs religious classes outside school. The Polish church found itself deprived, therefore, of its traditional role as the guardian of personal sexual relations and was unable to form the young minds at school. Unlike the pre-war Polish church, which, in order to safeguard its land and properties, was deeply enmeshed with the anti-working-class ruling establishment, Cardinal Wyszyński's church became a champion of human rights and freedom of expression, and in that way firmly established its credentials as being separate and apart from the ruling organs of the State. The church publicly sympathized with the Jews persecuted in the anti-semitic purges of 1968 and expressed support for the "rightful struggle of the Polish workers" during the strikes of 1970 and again in 1976. It did not formally support KOR and the other oppositionists in the period 1976-80, but church leaders always criticized attempts by the security police and authorities to harass or arrest dissident intellectuals.

Within a church which had to be tolerated, if not fully accepted, by the State, there was also room for widening the boundaries of intellectual freedom. The Clubs of the Catholic Intelligentsia in Warsaw, Cracow, Wroclaw, Poznan and Torun, provided, not just meeting places, but opportunities for non-Communist intellectuals from different disciplines to meet, exchange ideas, and forge links. The Catholic intellectual journals, although limited in circulation because of restrictions on paper availability, also showed the possibility of maintaining systems of thought and expression that were independent of the State ideology.

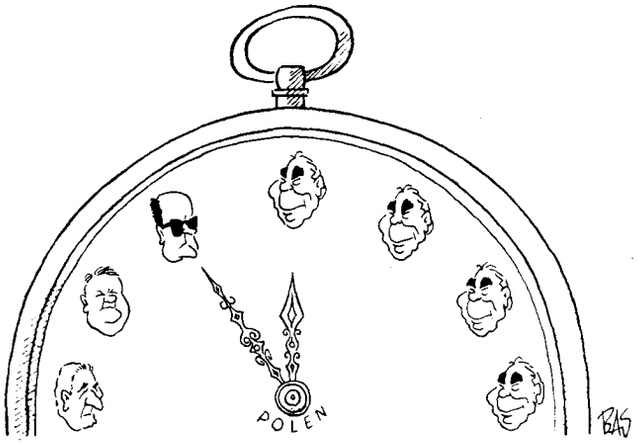
Again, it is important to stress that although the word "Catholic" figures in the title of these clubs and journals, they were not necessarily theologically or spiritually orientated. Although religious subjects were featured as discussion topics, questions of economics, politics, history, culture, were endlessly debated. This parallel intellectual life was relatively open and tolerated. It should not be confused with the samizdat publications of dissident circles in the Soviet Union, or the discussion groups inside Czechoslovakia. The tacit concordat between the State and the Polish church created a space, not just for Catholics, but also for lay intellectuals who discussed seculare subjects. This developed, not only a tast for, but also the practical experience of, organizing discussion groups or editorial boards that were clearly separate from, and independent of, Party and State.

After the creation of Solidarity many of these intellectuals turned to the new union to offer advice and help. Long before August 1980, in the big university towns, there already existed an experienced cadre of intellectuals associated with the Catholic church who had the experience and the confidence to know that forms of organization and expression independent of the State and Party were perfectly possible. One cannot start a mass social movement like Solidarity from scratch. The Catholic church in Poland had provided an example of an independent force co-existing with the one-party State. It had also helped nurture the growth of thousands of independent lay people who would help Solidarity firmly implant its roots.

NEVER BEFORE in its history has Poland had two such internationally renowned sons as Lech Walesa and Pope John Paul II. The election in 1978 of Cracow's Cardinal Karol Wojtyla to be Pope John Paul II seemed to express international endorsement of the role and activities of the Polish church. The new pope's dynamic, public-relations-conscious style carried the papacy to a position of world authority that it had not enjoyed for a long time. When he visited Poland in June 1979, more than half-a-million people flocked to southern Poland to greet him. The entire logistical organization of this mass movement of people was carried out by the church, not helped by State or regional authorities. Neither police nor militia were to be seen. It was an important psychological first in Eastern Europe.

For the first time there took place what was, in effect, a mass (large numbers of people, not the religious service) meeting which was perfectly organized, calm, and purposeful, and yet, had nothing to do with the Communist Party. Bringing people together for mass events is an important part of the development of a popular movement. The sense one has of being united with scores of thousands of like-minded people, and of feeling far less vulnerable to being individually targeted by authority gives one a confidence-strengthening belief in one's ability to defy those in power. One should not romanticize the event, but some Solidarity activists talk of the pope's visit as the point when, for the first time, Poles saw and felt their own strength as a mass force.

The presence of a Polish pope in the Vatican has added a different kind of safeguard for Solidarity. Stalin's sneering question: "How many divisions does the pope have?" seems even more irrelevant today than when he posed it during the war. At the height of one of the Soviet invasion scares a rumor went round Warsaw that should Russian troops cross the



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border, the pope was going to smuggle himself back into Poland to be with his people. An unlikely story, yet both the Polish and Soviet leaderships cannot but take into consideration the international influence of the pope, especially in strongly Catholic third world countries where Moscow-oriented Communist parties or where Communist-led national liberation movements are struggling to win popular support. For Polish workers themselves, whose lives since infancy have been surrounded by religious symbolism, the fact of having a fellow countryman sitting in St. Peter's must seem little short of miraculous and a sign from heaven, as it were, that Poland, at least for the time being, has favored nation status with God.

ACCORDING TO Edmund Baluka the Poles are "great hypocrites" about their church. It is perhaps too easy to be overly impressed by the outward religiosity of the Poles, the crucifixes and pictures of the pope. It does not follow that the church has substantial influence, let alone exercises power, over Solidarity. The undoubted commitment to the Catholic faith of the Polish workers does not tell us what political, economic, and social decisions they will take. To go to Mass every Sunday, as do most Solidarity members , is no guide as to how they vote in a democratic decision-making process. In 1981 the pope campaigned and spoke out against Italy's abortion law. Despite the wave of highly emotional sympathy that he enjoyed following the attempt on his life, the Italian-Catholic-population decisively rejected his advice and, in a referendum, voted to endorse the State provision of abortion.

On the day after Cardinal Wyszynski died, three members of a Solidarity delegation who were in the United States appeared on the MacNeil-Lehrer Report, a prestigious television current affairs program. For the first ten minutes the two American interviewers bombarded them with questions about what the death of Wyszynski would mean for Poland and for Solidarity. The Polish workers' answers conveyed a deep sense of the tremendous moral respect that they had for the late cardinal, but none of them could think of a single change in the activities of Solidarity that would be brought about by the Cardinal's death. The American interviewers were clearly disappointed, but like many other Western media commentators, they had made the false connection between, on the one hand, the position of the church in Polish society, and the religious beliefs of individual Poles, and on the other hand, the idea that the church therefore plays an instrumental role in guiding Solidarity.

It may be that there are some within the Polish church who would like to have more influence over Solidarity. Like all powerful institutions, the Polish church is a highly political body. Unfortunately, unlike Solidarity, the church's leaders do not debate their differences in public, or make the minutes of the Bishops' Conference available for public distribution. There is clearly some resentment in some church sections at the role of certain Solidarity activists who stress the secular and socialist ambitions of the new union. In December 1980, Father Alojzy Orszulik, Director of the Press Office of the Polish Episcopate, issued a statement critical of KOR and Jacek Kuron. It implied that the continuing presence of KOR activists was unwelcome to the church and even hinted that the church would not react if the authorities took action against Kuron.

Orszulik's statement was widely criticized in Poland by many priests and Catholic lay intellectuals, and the church has not made such explicitly condemnatory remarks about the secular, socialist wing in Solidarity since. Even Cardinal Wyszynski kept his distance from Orszulik's remarks by receiving KOR member Adam Michnik shortly after the statement. It is reasonable to suppose that the physical weakness and illness of Cardinal Wyszynski during the last year of his life suspended what would otherwise have been a political fight within the church on how to deal with Solidarity. Now that a figure of such authority inside the church is no longer there, different factions will probably more openly begin vying for influence.

According to Adam Michnik, the KOR activist and lecturer at the flying university, the Polish church offers, from a long-term perspective, a perfect model for the co-existence of an independent social formation and those who hold power. "This model unites two fundamental factors: an understanding of realities; and constant pressure on those in power." But Michnik added that there were different tendencies in the church: there were those who saw the possibilities of an "Iranization" of Poland with a weakening central power confronted by religious forces thinking only of its overthrow; those who wanted the church to come to a deal with the State in exchange for increased ecclesiastical liberties; and then finally, priests close to Solidarity who wanted an open church in a pluralist society — "a church that does not want to be authoritarian, but which defends its own rights as part of the general defense of human rights." In Michnik's view, the Pope belongs to this latter category. When he made this analysis in November 1980, Michnik stressed that there was more than one tendency at work within the episcopate.

Although I have tried to show that it is wrong to inflate the church's role in Solidarity or to assume the hidden hand of the bishops on the occasions when Solidarity draws back from confrontation, it is equally mistaken to dismiss the church, as do some Western left-wingers, as an irrelevant, backward-looking force that Solidarity will jettison as the Polish workers grow stronger. The future of both institutions is bound together. Solidarity, its members, and the large sections of the Polish population who are not members of, but who support, Solidarity, draw confidence from the church's support for the new union. The church, in turn, knows that only the workers have enough power to force through real political changes that can open up society in the direction that the church has always claimed it wanted to go. The church in Poland has enjoyed its greatest ascendancy under a period of "Godless" Communist rule. Since the arrival of Solidarity, however, the church has lost its role of being the sole independent champion of the Polish people. The church's search for a new, and from its point of view, satisfactory, role, will be an important element in the changes Poland is living through.

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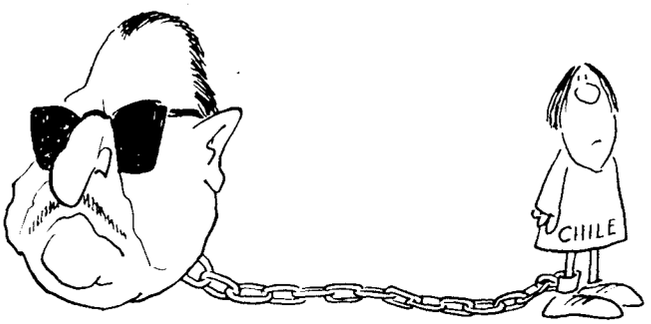
PINOCHET'S CHILE SETTLES IN FOR THE LONG RUN



The routine of repression

PEADAR KIRBY

THE VISIT of Mrs. Jeane Kirkpatrick to Santiago at the beginning of August and her words of praise for the "successes" of the Chilean economy as she saw them mark a new stage of self-confidence for the Pinochet regime. This was most clearly expressed within days of her leaving Chile when four leading former politicians, three of them former government ministers, were detained in their homes in the early hours of the morning, driven by police to the Argentinian border and sent into indefinite exile. Their crime had been to sign a letter of support for the imprisoned leadership of a trade union confederation, the CNS.

Ruling since last March as a constitutional president with virtually unlimited powers, General Pinochet is more powerful than he has ever been. The treatment of the four exiled politicians is only one small example of the summary treatment given to any Chilean who expresses views opposed to the regime's paranoid anti-Communism or opposes in any way its absolute powers. Last year 106 people were relocated under a new scheme by which the government sends opponents to live in the isolated and sparsely populated extreme north or south of the country for periods ranging from three to eighteen months. This is done by simple administrative decree and so the relocated person cannot appeal against it.

Surveillance of the population by the feared CNI, the successor to the well-known DINA set up by General Pinochet after the September 1973 coup, has been so thorough as to make most Chileans afraid to voice any political views except to those they can absolutely trust. Detentions continue with the police now having power to hold people for up to twenty days in secret detention centers. At times these are tortured and in the first months of this year thirty-eight cases of torture were reported to the Catholic church's Vicariate of Solidarity which is the most active body in monitoring the regime's abuses of human rights and defending the victims.

A wave of attacks on police, of explosions, and of bank robberies which began a year ago and was blamed on left-wing groups became an excuse for increased repression. However, the discovery that the robbery of forty-five million pesos (just over one million dollars) from a bank in Calama in the north of Chile in March was the work of the chief of the CNI in the town and another agent has cast doubts on the real authors of many of last year's crimes. The Calama incident takes on a particularly sinister aspect since two employees of the bank were abducted and then murdered by these agents who blew up their bodies with explosives to prevent recognition. In this way the crime was being implicitly blamed on the disappeared employees. Furthermore the CNI chief in the city of Arica on the Peruvian border was also implicated and his body later found in a car with a bullet through the head.

The whole episode was the occasion for numerous calls on the government for an investigation into the CNI which have gone unheeded. Indeed, the agents involved haven't yet been brought to justice. It is just one more case in the bloody saga of crimes by the security forces since the 1973 coup. As yet almost seven hundred cases of people who disappeared while in police custody have never been investigated by the government despite recent finds of mass graves with the mutilated bodies of some of those listed as disappeared.

The full reason for continuing this network of surveillance even after the military have institutionalized themselves in power is not understood without an appreciation of the regime's ideology. No occasion is missed to stress the threat of "extremism" or "Communism." The military ceremonies to mark General Pinochet's eighth anniversary as commander-in-chief of the army on August 24 last was just such an occasion. "Today we are again faced with marxist aggression which has grown," General Pinochet said. "To stamp out this marxist aggression in the first place we must dismiss the possibility of political parties until the country is tranquil. Neither can we accept political activity because that would be vulnerable to marxist aggression. The so-called democratic system includes the struggle for power and that therefore opens the flanks to marxist aggression. That can not be allowed."

The basis of Pinochet's political model is to stamp out not only all political groupings autonomous of the government but even to stamp out political thought itself. All political parties are now in what is called "recess" and every effort is made to ensure that former party members do not use other groups through which to work. This is clearest in the case of trade unions. Candidates for leadership positions must have no political record and national federations of trade unions which

PEADAR KIRBY *is an Irish journalist who recently returned from an extended stay in Latin America.*

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might become an alternative political vehicle to the official government-controlled organizations are not allowed. Even small groups which might meet to discuss political issues are prevented through the regulation that even a meeting in a private house needs police permission. Neighbors have the right to "denounce" such events to the police who then investigate.

It was because they attempted to support what could have become an alternative political organization that the four former politicians were exiled. The illegal CNS had, with the support of almost four hundred individual unions, submitted a list of trade union demands to the government. The only response was the arrest of the entire CNS leadership accused of being "an entity of the Communist Party." Even the open support for the CNS by the Catholic church in the person of Cardinal Silva of Santiago who visited the leaders in jail or a committee of solidarity which included such well-known names as the former Christian Democratic President, Eduardo Frei, and the party's candidate who was defeated by Salvador Allende in the 1970 presidential election, Radomiro Tomic (who could hardly be accused of being supporters of Communism) did not change the government's mind.

The press, too, is severely restricted. All the daily papers mirror the government's ideology which is shown up and criticized only by a weekly newsmagazine, *Hoy*, and a Jesuit monthly, *Mensaje*, read by an educated elite, and the fortnightly magazine of the Vicariate of Solidarity, called *Solidaridad*. Because of its strong anti-government line and its popular appeal it is constantly under harassment by the police and can only exist with the protection of the Catholic church.

Reinforcing the political model being implemented is the monetarist economic model of the Pinochet regime. This is presented in true technocratic fashion as being the only answer to Chile's economic problems, and its successes are often pointed to by the government. The most notable of these is the fall in the inflation rate from almost forty percent in 1979 to an expected ten percent this year. The money supply, one of the sacred dogmas of monetarism, has been cut back and fell by five percent in the first six months of 1981. The shops are full of luxury goods at prices well below those in their country of origin.

But the cost of all this falls on the less well-off. While professionals' salaries have grown by some ninety percent over the past three years, those of workers have only grown by twenty percent. With trade unions only able to negotiate with their immediate boss and not join with other unions to negotiate on a sector level, the workers are in a weak position to achieve any gains. Strikes are legal for only sixty days after which workers have to accept the management's offer or resign their jobs. In this way most of the gains of the Chilean working class this century have been wiped out virtually overnight.

While prices of luxury goods are cheap, those of basics are very expensive. A list of prices of basic foodstuffs compared with equivalent prices in the U.S. drawn up by an American living in Santiago showed the Chilean prices to be between one-third and one-half more expensive than U.S. prices. A church group, the Academy of Christian Humanism, has a price index based on the prices of thirty-eight basic products which form sixty-six percent of the purchases of the poorest twenty percent of Santiago's population. These prices rose by an average nine percent higher than the overall average price increases in the year May 1980 to May last year.

Unemployment too has been growing. The average figure of 5.9 percent of the workforce unemployed per year from 1960 to 1973 rose to 13.5 percent in 1979 and 11.9 percent in 1980. However, to this must be added those on the government's only unemployment assistance, the Program of Minimal Employment (PEM). Through this workers get 1,300 pesos (33 dollars) a month but they have to accept whatever work they are given which is usually hard laboring work. While government works receive cheap labor in this way, the true unemployment figure is deflated. With those on PEM added, 17.3 percent was the real figure for unemployment last year. Objectively, therefore, a shift of wealth from the poorer sectors to the richer sectors can be seen as a result of the government's economic policies.

The reasons for this lie in the fixed rate of exchange of the peso which since January last year has been fixed at 39 pesos to the dollar. Therefore imports get progressively cheaper while exports and local products are hit. This has meant a growth of imports from $2,700,000 worth in 1970 to $6,000,000 worth last year. Meanwhile exports have only grown from $2,300,000 worth to $4,700,000 worth in the same period. Under this impact many native Chilean industries have not been able to compete and have had to close down. Neither has this policy encouraged investment in productive industry within the country and most growth has taken place in the service sector, including commerce and financial houses, while growth in the productive sector has been slow.

While the full costs of the economic model on the many poor of Chile may not be known for years to come, what does seem certain at the moment is that General Pinochet is here to stay. His political opposition has no power and is deeply divided both among the Christian Democrats and even more among the left. Even the Catholic church, which has been the only voice speaking out against the regime that could not be driven underground, has begun to settle down to live with General Pinochet. And after the visit of Jeane Kirkpatrick so too it seems has the U.S. government.

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Art

ACT OF EXORCISM

CHARLOTTE: LIFE OR THEATER?

THE CONTEMPORARY vocabulary of carnage—megatonnage and its yield in megadeaths—is utterable only in an age capable of disposing of human beings on statistical grounds. The worth of the individual is a cliché made obsolete by the modern state's aptitude for mass slaughter. We have lived to see holocaust itself appropriated by the state as a legitimate instrument of politics. Consequently, the publication of *Charlotte: Life or Theater?**, the painted autobiography of Charlotte Salomon, a young woman murdered at Auschwitz, comes as an attempt to reassert the primacy of a single life against a conceptual world of which Auschwitz was one of the more grisly manifestations.

In 1939, Charlotte Salomon, a twenty-two-year-old Jewish artist, left Berlin for her grandparents' home in southern France. There, over the next two years, she was driven to painting *Life or Theater?* Worked on paper in gouache, a viscous watercolor medium, this chronicle begins before her birth in 1917 and continues through 1940. Structured as a "Singspiel," or play with song, the story of her life unfolds at a tinkly, music-hall pace reminiscent of a Weimar cabaret. Painted vignettes provide the Acts and Scenes. Snippets of dialogue and of the customary sources of Expressionist inspiration (Goethe, Heine, Nietzche, Verlaine, German folk tunes, the music of Mozart, Bach, Beethoven, Schubert, Weber) make up the libretto for what is an effort at an opera of social satire in the vein of Kurt Weill. *Life or Theater?* even has its own Lotte Lenya — Charlotte's stepmother, Paulinka, a successful professional singer who loomed large in Charlotte's imagination.

Late in the summer of 1942 Charlotte left *Life or Theater?* in two packages of over one thousand annotated gouaches, in the care of the French physician who had sheltered her for a time after the deaths of both grandparents. Shortly afterward, the Nazis found her and shipped her to Auschwitz where she died the following year.

Recovered after the war by Charlotte's father and stepmother, who survived with the aid of the Dutch underground, *Life or Theater?* was eventually brought to the attention of the Jewish Historical Museum in Amsterdam. Taking possession of the work in 1972, the museum assumed responsibility for arranging the gouaches and the text that they illustrate in their proper sequence. The museum's subsequent show of the reordered work moved Dutch film director Franz Weisz, in collaboration with poet Judith Herzberg, to create the screenplay "Charlotte." The release of the film in 1981, coinciding with the inauguration of a new touring exhibition and with the publication of this book, represents a concerted effort to popularize Charlotte's name and work, making it as familiar in this country as it has become in Germany and the Netherlands.

The autobiographical basis of *Life or Theater?* invites the inevitable comparison to Anne Frank. Judith Belinfante, director of the Jewish Historical Museum, rejects any such parallel in her preface to the Viking edition: "This is unfair to both works — to the adolescent spontaneity of the one as to the conscious artistry of the other. Charlotte Salomon was twenty-three when she began work on *Life or Theater?* and followed nearly to completion the university-level training for painters at the Hochschule für Bildenda Kunst in Berlin. Unlike Anne Frank, Charlotte had left her youth behind."

Once made, however, the comparison leads to the recognition that *Life or Theater?* is very much akin to *The Diary of Anne Frank*. Neither work is self-sustaining. Each relies for its impact on the audience's knowledge of the circumstances of its production and the monstrousness of the death dealt its author. Each work pays scant attention to significant aspects of reality, deriving its full emotive force not from its content but from its history.

Charlotte Salomon had hardly left her youth behind when she began her autobiography. On the contrary, the project is charged with a keen unripeness, both emotionally and stylistically. Youthful bravura ("That which van Gogh achieved later in life, a brushstroke of unprecedented lightness . . . I have attained already.") is as characteristic of *Life or Theater?* as the hero-worship at the heart of it.

The object of Charlotte's adoration was three-fold: the stepmother; the stepmother's melancholic voice instructor, Alfred Wolfsohn (called Amadeus Doberlohn in the text, he enters the play to the strains of the Toreador Song from "Carmen"); and the mystico-romantic currents of German Expressionism absorbed from Wolfsohn. *Life or Theater?* is very much a sampler of those Expressionist tenets, poses, aspirations, and sources which, by 1940, had lost their innovative character and become a highly fashionable mannerism.

From its revolutionary beginnings in the formation of Die Brücke in 1905 until its condemnation by the Nazis in 1937 as "Degenerative Art," Expressionism had come to enjoy wide popularity and a flourishing art market. In the inflation-racked economy of Germany between the two world wars, the buying of Expressionist painting had become an alternative to savings and securities. Expressionism was in vogue, publicized in papers and magazines, promoted by galleries and museums. Popular acceptance guaranteed its adoption by a succeeding generation of artists. Its emphasis away from the created object and onto the subjective, creative self, offered younger artists a seeming exemption from the difficulties of craft while simultaneously insuring sales.

The outlawing of such works by the Kulturbund called attention once more to the early political overtones to Expres-

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* *Charlotte: Life or Theater?*, an autobiographical play by Charlotte Salomon; translated from the German by Leila Vennewitz; introduction by Judith Herzberg. The Viking Press, $75, 784 pp.

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sionism: its anti-authoritarianism, its implicit pacifism, its fervent hopes for utopian social renewal. This could only have enhanced its appeal to a young art student who was herself outlawed during the Nazi regime.

Similarly, Charlotte's choice of a Weill-like framework for *Life or Theater?* corresponds to her image of herself as aligned with the anti-bourgeois radical elite (most of whom like Charlotte, emerged from bourgeois backgrounds) that initially comprised the Expressionist movement. Weill had been an original sponsor of the Novembergruppe, the focal point of cultural life in Berlin from its inception in 1918. A Who's Who of the German intellectual and artistic world at the time, the Novembergruppe formed the core of the modern movement in Germany for all the arts. An exponent of radical political and musical ideas, Weill saw his work banned in Germany until after the war. Doubly outcast as Jew and as artist, Weill provided a compelling model for a young Jewish woman emulating the generation of painters who quoted aloud from *Thus Spake Zarathustra*.

As a work of art, a thing made that demands an allegiance of its own apart from biographical or historical considerations, *Life or Theater?* rarely attains the force of its derivations. The early gouaches of childhood trips and celebrations are delightful. In these lovingly remembered and densely packed scenes, an unfettered compositional sense and pictorial humor carry the day. They display a playful, whimsical talent that is, however, largely out of kilter with what is attempted and depicted in succeeding plates. Too few of the gouaches have strength or interest apart from the text which supplies both coherence and meaning. Nevertheless, as an act of exorcism, it is a moving document and a stunning achievement. It is the achievement of a personality, of the will rather than of the hand. This is art denied its status as labor, serving instead as emotional release and a stay against terror. The terror is overwhelmingly personal and the book a talisman more against an ominous family history, clotted with a harrowing number of suicides, than against the Nazi necropolis.

The power of the work is in its sheer volume, suggestive as it is that the making of it was an obsessive ritual and a race against the time left. Charlotte's gradual collapse into scrawl, while it fails to result in any one convincing image, reinforces a sense of the urgency of its production. Conceived of as a work of art and presented as such in this lavishly printed volume of full-color reproductions, *Charlotte: Life or Theater?* is a testament to the fragile truth that an artist's claim on our attention derives not from art but from the artist's own humanity.

As a relic of the Holocaust, the work is remarkable for its innocence. It appears as innocent of the scope of Nazi intention as was the rest of Europe before the summer of 1942. The handful of plates that refers to the Nazi encroachments on the Jewish community provide little more than a backdrop to the drama of personal remembrance that is *Life or Theater?*'s motivating concern. There are the occasional references ("Whoever buys from any Jew, himself a filthy swine is too!") but the burden of its attention, its energy, its wit, and its anger is elsewhere.

Everything is subservient to the act of remembering. Many recollections summon up the family tragedies which fixed Charlotte in the anticipation of some inexorable doom ("I'm afraid it's starting with me too. Dear God don't let me go mad.") that threatened from within. But the weight of memory collects to a point in an unresolved, partly inciting, partly humiliating, first love affair.

Close to five hundred of the 769 illustrations reproduced here recall Alfred Wolfsohn. This egocentric demi-lover, a man with a talent for turning women into disciples, is evoked with the thoroughness of depth psychology and the ferocity and satirical verve of a woman misused. Nothing is left unexplored — his pedantry, his conceit, his Christ-complex, his high-strung aestheticism, his disingenuousness, his rhetorical flourishes, his ambiguous sexuality, his morbidity. Page upon page is given over to his editorializing: "My discovery of the similarity between what young girls produce and what certain geniuses produce is completely justified. Like young girls, certain great men, such as Nietzche, have a boundless yearning to surrender themselves to a particular object. . . . My hopes, therefore, lie with the future souls of young girls who are willing to tread the path of Christ, the Orpheus path, into themselves."

By contrast, her father's incarceration in a labor camp and subsequent release is summarized in four plates, none of them mentioning either the details of his imprisonment, the duration of it, or the reason for his freedom. All we are told is that her stepmother used her influence. But what kind of influence did a Jewish woman have with Nazi authorities, with whom and on what grounds? The effects on the father of his time in a slave labor brigade is dispatched in a single plate which depicts him sitting up in bed while the stepmother states: "We'll somehow succeed to get him back on his feet." Charlotte's own internment, with her grandfather, in the French camp of Gurs is

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omitted altogether. Also missing is any word of her marriage to fellow-refugee Alexander Nagler, her pregnancy, the facts of her life in France after release from Gurs, her refusal to go underground.

The omissions, together with the girlish emphasis on love — love wished for, love remembered, love transformed in art — make *Life or Theater?* an "easy" record to read. And the ease of it is part of its horror because it denies what has since been learned: the full dimensions of the enemy, the nature of the odds. The work proceeds as if the only enemy — indeed, the only entity — were the remembering Self.

It is impossible to know to what extent this Expressionist limitation on vision made Charlotte Salomon more accessible to the Nazi machinery than she might have been. All that is clear, on the evidence of *Life or Theater?*, is that her involvement with memory, fantasy, and the extravagant claims of art was so intense as to over-balance the actual.

Yet the painful suspicion remains that her eager faith in the heady Symbolist connection between the ego and the world, between art and the universe, increased her vulnerability and accelerated the fate she dreaded. Considering herself "the living model" of Wolfson's borrowed theories, she was susceptible to Mallarmé's pronouncement: "Everything in the cosmos exists to emerge as a great Book." Having accomplished the Book, the orphic explanation of things Wolfsohn encouraged her to believe she would one day produce, her work was done. Now "everything was all right and she did not have to kill herself like her ancestors, for according to his methods, one can be resurrected."

Everything was all right. So she protected her Book by leaving it in safe-keeping while sidestepping what protection there was for herself. She exposed herself to official attention by marrying Nagler against the advice of friends. She refused to go underground, ignoring the urgings of members of the Resistance who argued for it at a time when it was still possible to find shelter in the French mountains.

Whether Charlotte's choices were spurred by defiance, naiveté, the mechanisms of denial, or by an unconscious surrender to the beckoning of family ghosts can only be sorrowful conjecture. All that is given is a single gouache of Charlotte hovering outside a no-Jews-allowed cafe because "After all, it's not that obvious that I'm Jewish."

The introductory material to this Viking edition accepts at face value Charlotte's idealization of art and of herself as an artist. It makes no effort to understand those idealizations in context or to draw from them whatever conclusions are forthcoming. The neglect is regrettable because the common vulnerability of all of us is increased whenever we permit ourselves to forget that art can be put to any human purpose whatever. And that those who make it and behold it are not necessarily more humane than those who do not. Adolph Hitler, like Charlotte Salomon, was a watercolorist. Albert Speer, diarist of the Third Reich and the man credited with instituting the slave labor brigades in which Charlotte and her family served, was an accomplished writer.

Charlotte: Life or Theater? stands as an exquisite reminder that, in the end, the essential thing is to have lived life, not art. As such, it earns its place as a *memento mori* for each of us, marked men in a nuclear age.

MAUREEN MULLARKEY

Screen

EARLY RETIREMENT

ENCOUNTER WITH TWO SENIOR CITIZENS

BEING A YOUNG CURMUDGEON myself, I'm always glad to make the acquaintance of an old curmudgeon. I always try to treat him with the courtesy to which I feel his age and bad temper entitle him. The way I figure it is, if a man doesn't suffer fools gladly, no matter how long it's taken him to learn such intolerance, he deserves my respect and admiration. Recently, I ran into two old curmudgeons at the movies, and for a while there I had high hopes for one of them. But I'm sorry to say neither of them worked out. Even the one I took a liking to — Norman Thayer, Jr. (Henry Fonda), who spends his summers out *On Golden Pond* — turned out to be a lot less flinty than he at first seemed. Despite a really promising beginning, in fact, it soon became apparent that Norman was not an old curmudgeon at all, but an old softie, a regular lamb in wolf's clothing. What a disappointment.

For the first twenty minutes or half hour of the movie, Norman really had me going. Norman is getting on to eighty, and he has a wife named Ethel (Katharine Hepburn) who's no spring chicken herself. Norman loves Ethel quite a bit. Fact is, she's about the only thing in life he does love, even though she's so spry and chipper and full of gumption, it's enough to drive you nuts. She's forever sending him out to pick wild strawberries for lunch, or dreaming up some other nonsensical task for him to do. Norman's got other plans. He pores over the help-wanted ads in *The Local Astonisher* looking for gainful employ. He thinks chauffeur might be good, or maybe sales clerk.

Basically, though, he just passes his time being a sourdough. He could make you believe that growing old might not be so bad after all. The deterioration inside his body has finally reached a state of equilibrium with the mess that he always knew existed outside, in the rest of the world. The result is not exactly what I would call inner peace. It's more like a standoff. But it's given Norman a cranky, delightfully crabby wisdom about life.

Still, if I'd had any sense I'd have realized right off that a man can't be perfect if he lives some place as sappy-sounding as "Golden Pond," the location which Ernest Thompson's adaptation of his hit play retains for the movie. Anybody living in a place with a name like that is bound to have a little sunshine fall into his life sooner or later, and the sunshine that falls into Norman's is a kid named Billy Ray (Doug McKeon). Actually, Billy doesn't look half bad himself at first. When

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Norman asks him what he likes to do at home in California, the kid has the spunk to tell the truth. "Cruise girls," he tells Norman, "and suck face" (you know, kiss). He seems as if he's an obnoxious enough kid to give Norman a run for his money. What's more, Billy comes with a perfect straight man in the person of his father, Bill Ray (Dabney Coleman).

Bill is a dentist, and the boyfriend of Norman's daughter Chelsea (Jane Fonda), who is stopping off for a family visit on her way to vacation in Europe with Bill. Bill is the humorless, overly earnest type who is Norman's meat. They have the kind of conversation we might imagine Abraham Lincoln would have with Richard Nixon. Norman gets Bill's goat first thing by playing dumb. When Bill stumbles all over himself trying to ask whether it's all right for him and Chelsea to sleep together in Norman's house, Norman willfully misunderstands just what arrangements he's supposed to give permission for. First he pretends to think that Bill is asking him to let Billy sleep with Chelsea; and after that's cleared up, he's under the impression that Bill would like to sleep with Ethel. After a few minutes of this little chat with Norman, Bill doesn't know whether he's coming or going.

One reason Norman can get away with these monkeyshines is that he sometimes doesn't know whether he's coming or going, either. If he's not flirting with Ethel, he's flirting with senility. At one point, he loses his way walking back from the end of his own road. Another time, he picks up a picture of himself with his family when Chelsea was little, and he can't figure out for the life of him who the heck those people in the photograph are. Unfortunately, like Norman's memory, or his angina palpitations, the comedy in this movie comes and goes. It's Billy's arrival that causes senility to set in to the movie itself — not only to Thompson's script, but to Mark Rydell's direction as well. Bill and Chelsea take off for Europe, leaving Billy in Norman and Ethel's care until they return. And sure enough, although Billy starts out being auspiciously hostile and surly about this turn of events, Norman wins him over in two shakes of a bunny's tail. Why, in no time at all he's got Billy out fishing with him. It's revolting.

Norman does have an occasional relapse into his old, awful, wonderful self, as when Chelsea returns from her trip to Europe with Bill and announces that she got married in Belgium. "Belgium, huh," says Norman skeptically, "Does the fella speak any English?" But in most of the rest of the movie, Norman's relationship with the kid renders them both depressingly harmless. The only kind of stories more tedious than those about a boy and his dog are the ones about a boy and his gramps. I don't see how Norman could stand it.

GENERAL HARLAN BACHE (George C. Scott), the senior citizen in *Taps*, is never really in a class with Norman Thayer, Jr. Bache hasn't got the makings of a hard heart, just hard arteries. The only thing Bache has in common with Norman, in fact, is the insufferable devotion of a youngster. The whippersnapper in Bache's life is Cadet Colonel Brian Moreland (Timothy Hutton), the commander of the corps at Bunker Hill Military Academy, where Bache is commandant. The board of trustees decides behind the general's back to sell the school for development into condos. Since bad luck always comes in bunches, other catastrophes at once follow upon this one. Bache is involved in the shooting of a civilian teenager; then he has a heart attack — things like that. But Moreland and the rest of the corps rally behind him. They do more than that: they seize the enormous arsenal of grenade launchers, automatic weapons, and anti-tank guns Bache has built up for his kids to play with, and they take over the academy. *Taps* turns into a right-wing version of Lindsay Anderson's *If . . .*, which was already pure nonsense in its original, left-wing version.

I'm sorry I can't tell you the outcome of this fascinating dilemma. I walked out. In about the same amount of time it took *On Golden Pond* to get me hooked on Norman Thayer, *Taps* managed to lose me forever. After what I'd seen in the first few reels, I assumed that nothing General Bache could do would bring him back to life. He is exactly the kind of fool that Norman won't suffer gladly, so why should I? Poor George C. Scott. General Patton is never going to die. George is just going to fade away as an actor playing the role over and over and over again. *Taps* opens with General Bache addressing the corps in stentorian, not to say Pattonian, tones. In light of this beginning, the best moment in the movie has to be when Bache, a few scenes later, complains bitterly to Mr. Moreland about how today's movies always portray military leaders as madmen. I figured that the movie was never going to top that remark. So I left.

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Books: A HANKERING FOR PRE-PLATO

THE PRE-PUBLICATION reviews of Robert Nozick's *Philosophical Explanations* are certainly intimidating. "Arresting, original, extremely brilliant": Marshall Cohen. "How, could anyone fail to rejoice in the walk this book takes us on about the world of the great questions": John Wheeler. I failed to rejoice.

Nozick's work is an extended examination (647 pages of text and 100 pages of footnotes) on a series of more or less connected topics of central concern within the grandest philosophical tradition. Under the three great headings of Metaphysics, Epistemology and Value, Nozick tackles such perennially deep problems as personal identity, why is there something rather than nothing, how is knowledge possible, the problem of free will and the good, philosophy and the meaning of life. As a philosophical menu, it is clearly *Plato du jour*. In a charming aside, Nozick notes how anyone must feel addressing such transcendental themes.

> Isn't it ludicrous for someone just one generation from the *shtetl*, a *pisher* from Brownsville and East Flatbush in Brooklyn, even to touch on the topics of such monumental thinkers? Of course it is. Yet it was ludicrous for them too. We are all just a few years past something or other, if only childhood.

The philosopher's task is indeed a kind of fool's labor. As such, a professional temptation is to avoid expressing that uncomfortable fact by fooling around. When I rejoiced least in Nozick's work, it was when I felt he had succumbed to the ludicrousness of philosophy.

To accuse someone of "fooling around" with the deepest problems of human life sounds terribly harsh—and it is not exactly meant as a compliment—yet there is something to be said for "the fooling around tradition" in philosophy. If, as Whitehead claimed, the history of Western philosophy is a "series of footnotes to Plato," Plato himself is a compendium of complaints against sophistry. Sophistry could be regarded as the oldest philosophic tradition, and it is the fooling around tradition *par excellence*. We know that "sophistic" has come to mean sheer cleverness in argument, but Paul Shorey was also correct when he characterized the sophists as the full professors of a kind of Hellenic university extension school. Sophistry combines a certain professorial expertise with a species of verbal experimentation that often proves surprisingly fruitful. Sophistic playfulness tends to appear whenever a mainstream tradition has lost its vitality—or, historically, before the Platonic mainstream starts to flow. When Peter Ramus argued in 1536 that "Everything that Aristotle taught is false," one has to assume he was doing some creative fooling around at the end of a medieval Aristotelian tradition and before the emergence of the Cartesian questions that have dominated philosophy almost to the present day. Whether it is Nozick's stunning sophistication or Derrida's punning deconstruction, there appears to be a hankering for a pre-Platonic philosophy. Such hankering suggests we stand at the end of an era in philosophical thought.

PHILOSOPHIC EXPLANATIONS

Robert Nozick

Harvard University, $25, 747 pp.

Dennis O'Brien

Alisdair MacIntyre's review of *Philosophical Explanations* in the *N.Y. Times* salutes Nozick for writing a book "addressed simultaneously to professional colleagues and the common reader." My already considerable admiration for Alisdair MacIntyre rose as a result of that comment; evidently he had a much easier time with the text than I.

MacIntyre refers to the arguments as "semi-technical," which is a fair enough description. Nozick directly, and for analogical purposes, uses analytic devices developed within contemporary theories of logic and linguistics. The arguments are not stated in some highly specialized jargon, but that may make them all the more difficult to interpret since the ordinary reader may semi-understand half of the words. If it were pure technical talk, one would at least demand a translation. For instance, in discussing how human beings can talk about themselves or self-refer, Nozick writes sentences like the following: "A non-reflexive Gödel self-reference without indexicals is necessarily self-referring, while 'the yellow token on the black board' may self-refer in virtue of a feature of the tokening." The reader should expect no explication in this book about Gödel self-reference, indexicals, or tokening.

MacIntyre hails Nozick's work because it addresses issues of "human value and significance" that have been dealt with in an "impoverished and barren" fashion by such continental philosophers as "Kierkegaard, Sartre, Marcel, and Buber." Nozick, MacIntyre asserts, has brought intelligibility, elegance and precision to these great issues by the ingenious adaptation of the works by "W. V. Quine, Saul Kripke and Hilary Putnam." One need not defend the murkiness and rhetorical enthusiasms of continental existentialists to suggest that MacIntyre is just dead wrong about Nozick's accomplishment. *Philosophical Explanations* begins with one of the most profound and persistent issues in philosophy: the nature of the self, who

> *I, too seek an unreadable book: urgent thoughts to grapple with in agitation and excitement, revelations to be transformed by or to transform; a book incapable of being read straight through, a book, even, to bring reading to* stop.
>
> —Robert Nozick
> *Philosophical Explanations*

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am I? Does Nozick enrich our understanding of that issue? Just barely. The entire section is devoted to a very heady set of current puzzles about the nature of self-identity, e.g., if half of my brain was transplanted into another body and the other body acquired all my memories, etc., would it be me too? I suppose these puzzles may have some bearing on the nature of the self, but it seems a vast distance from the traditional (and layman's) worries.

The sophist named Phaedrus (in a Plato's dialogue by that name) runs into Socrates on the banks of the Illisus. After some preliminary banter, Phaedrus asks whether Socrates believes that Boreas actually carried off Orithyia from those very shores. Socrates gives a fanciful rationalization of the tale and then says that he really has no leisure for such inquiries. "I must first know myself. . . To be curious about that which is not my concern, while I am still in ignorance of my own self, would be ridiculous. . . . Am I a monster more complicated and swollen with passion than the serpent Typho, or a creature of a gentler and simple sort . . .?" The problem of the self as Socrates set it, and as it has persisted, has been what *sort* of a thing am I? If Socrates had fallen asleep by the Illisus and awakened as a full professor at Harvard looking like Robert Nozick, presumably he would still wonder whether this Nozick-Socrates was a monster of passion or something of a gentler sort? *First* I want to know what I am, *then* I will worry about what I would say if my Typhonic self is cloned, resurrected or duplicated on Io. My guess is that Socrates would have about as much interest in Nozick's treatment of the transposed self as he had about the transposed Orithyia.

When Michael Harrington reviewed Nozick's earlier work, *Anarchy, State and Utopia* in *Commonweal*, he said that it was not "simply wrong . . . (but) for the most part, cutely, cleverly and irrelevantly wrong." It is always embarrassing to say such things about a book which eventually won the National Book Award, but I am inclined to repeat the same adjectives for large parts of the work at hand. I believe it would be unfair to Nozick and the state of philosophy, however, to engage in airy dismissal. Nozick is indeed many of the things that his admirers claim: confident, brilliant, and inventive. It is also evident from the book that he has a deep human passion to discover "how we are valuable and precious." Why then does this dazzling display of erudition and technique strike me, me, at least, as razzle dazzle? The answer can be found in a deep background assumption about the nature of philosophy that is so ingrained in the academic tradition from which Nozick comes that it is as indetectable as it is unquestionable.

Insofar as Nozick adapts Quine, Kripke and Putnam he is adapting philosophical turns which have their natural roots in a "mathematical style" of philosophizing. Quine is one of our outstanding mathematical logicians, and Kripke and Putnam have made significant contributions to theories of logic. A mathematical style of philosophy may or may not use mathematical symbolization and techniques; it is the spirit of mathematics that is important. The mathematical spirit influences Nozick's treatment of traditional issues in two ways: metaphysically and methodologically.

Mathematics has to be the most non-existential of all intellectual disciplines. The metaphysical character of mathematical objects is wholly contained in their intelligibility. It makes absolutely no difference to the geometrical being of a triangle whether there are any existent triangles or not. As for triangles: to know one is to have one. The metaphysical status of mathematical objects is directly reflected in mathematical method. If you can formulate a consistent postulate set for geometry in which parallel lines meet, than you have invented a new (non-Euclidean) geometry. The fact that the new geometry appears to have no interpretation for this material universe makes no difference to the mathematician. if later, some physicist comes along and says, "By Einstein! this weird geometry is really a better description of actual space," that is an interesting irrelevancy to the mathematics.

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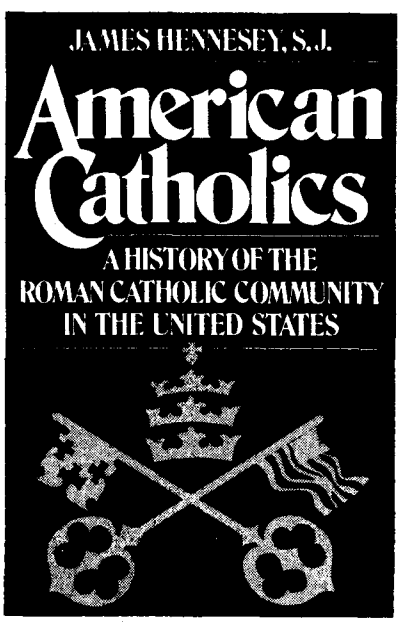

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For mathematics, intelligibility is the name of the game, and so it seems naturally attractive to philosophers who seek to make everything intelligible. (Few philosophers have been bold enough to pursue unintelligibility though many seem to have found it.) The problem with intelligibility as a watchword is "intelligible for what world?" One way of looking at Nozick's work would be to regard it as a set of alternate logical geometries which are tangential to the ordinary logical geometries we use to measure out our talk about the self, freedom and the good. If our ordinary logical geometries should turn out to be as inaccurate for the ethical world as Euclidean geometry turned out to be for the physical world, one or the other of Nozick's tangential logics may prove vastly important. Milton Babbitt applauds Nozick's "multiple modes and imaginative spirit." If philosophy could create its own world as Babbitt's music can, this would be all the praise necessary.

The power of the mathematical style for unconsciously structuring problems is present throughout the bulk of *Philosophical Explanations*. The ultimate or "unlimited" (which Nozick labels by the Hebrew *Ein Sof*: without end) may well be "beyond existing and non-existing"—a favorite claim of mystics and mathematicians whose ultimate is quite indifferent to existence. The continual resort in Nozick's arguments to self-referential hierarchies is characteristic of a realm where entities are created solely by linguistic rules, which rules can themselves be created by meta-linguistic rules, etc., etc., ad *Ein Sof*.

Free will is a special concern for Nozick—particularly given the wide play for freedom he advocates in *Anarchy, State and Utopia*—but it seems intellectually very puzzling to him how there can be such a notion. If one conjures a mathematical setting for this issue, one can see how intractable the problem becomes. In a mathematical world everything must follow by necessity once the system is set up. Squeezing freedom into mathematics is an impossible trick. Spinoza (who gets only one reference from Nozick) redid philosophy in a thorough geometrical mode and appropriately denied human freedom. Nozick struggles valiantly — he admits to floundering — with the issue but has to end with a theory of freedom in which all events are caused (the mathematical vision) but some are "caused" by the weighting we give to reasons in a decision. I prefer Spinoza.

The mathematical style in modern philosophy is pervasive. It can be a grand style for philosophy—as Spinoza himself illustrates. It is not, however, the only intelligible style. Aristotle, for one, is a consistently non-mathematical type. It is for this reason that he has no problems with free will—a fact that has annoyed his mathematical opponents for centuries.

In a short review, I will be bold enough to say that Aristotle is an "existential" philosopher, at least insofar as he holds that real objects, which come to be in time and are made out of various material goods, cannot be understood on the model of timeless mathematical forms. Aristotle is hardly an existentialist in the manner of Kierkegaard, Sartre, et al. scorned by MacIntyre, but all these "existentialists" suggests that existence is an important concern and that it wholly eludes the mathematical cast of mind. Since existence *is* irrelevant and unintelligible in mathematics, it is no wonder that philosophers who muck around in that stuff seem to Quine, Kripke, et al. confused and unintelligible.

Gilbert Harman suggests that Nozick's work "will change the way philosophy is done." Considering the number of announced philosophical revolutions in the history of the subject, some scepticism seems in order. If philosophers were to all become Nozickeans, however, it would be a revolution which returned to the elegant sophistic roots of the discipline: a time when professors knew how to argue brilliantly with one another but hadn't accomplished the Socratic revolution of shuttling forth into the *agora* to mix it up with poets and politicians.

The most popular saint

THE LAST CHRISTIAN

A BIOGRAPHY OF FRANCIS OF ASSISI

Adolf Höll
Doubleday, $12.95, 278 pp.

Michael F. McCauley

NO SAINT is as popular as Francis of Assisi. Rembrandt, though personally alienated by devotion to saints, painted him. Lenin is said to have died with Francis's name on his lips. Arnold Toynbee compared him not only to Jesus, but also to Buddha. G.K. Chesterton called him "the world's one sincere democrat," and the "first hero of humanism." Jack Kerouac selected him as the patron of the Beat generation. And Sir Kenneth Clark hailed Francis, despite his complete lack of theological training, as Europe's greatest religious genius. Now, the often-controversial Austrian theologian Adolf Höll argues quite convincingly that Francis was the "last Christian" to seriously try to live out the Gospel mandate of total, voluntary poverty.

Of course, Francis's cult of "Lady Poverty" could not realistically survive him. As a matter of fact, almost one hundred years after Francis's death, the first radical Franciscans who rigorously adhered to his ideal of poverty were burned at the stake in Marseilles. Officially, "it was heresy, the Pope declared for all time, to assert that Christ and the Apostles had no personal or collective property." In effect, Francis was "retroactively declared a heretic." He simply could not fit into the institutional church.

Francis, after all, was a strange individual: an obedient rebel, an earnest clown, an unworldly activist, an ascetical master of the arts of life, a restless wise man, a convivial penitent, a humble authoritarian. But underlying these remarkably contradictory qualities, Francis consistently refused to play games or give ground. He rejected the establishment of a rule in favor of simplicity — "the Lord wanted me to be his simpleton." He had a crazy stubbornness, denying himself all personal possessions ex-

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cept "a pair of drawers, a hooded robe, and a rope around his belly." Even these meager items of clothing he all too often gave away to those in greater need. In short, he ambitiously practiced the science of social climbing—downward. On the rare occasions when he spoke of himself, he always used the diminutive, calling himself "your little brother Francis."

In comparison with the popes and emperors of his time, the forty-four years of his life (1182-1226) were uneventful, almost hidden, provincial. In his mid-twenties, he had publicly dissociated himself from his father and taken to living on charity. At twenty-six, he began preaching about the need for repentance. Before long he had several companions, and eventually secured papal approval for his brotherhood (fellowship, society, alliance—*religio* in medieval Latin). He steadfastly refused, until he could hold out no longer, the institutionalizing of his brothers into a religious order.

After ten years of wandering — he visited the Holy Land, among other places—he returned home to face a crisis. Conflicts and hostilities threatened the solidarity of his companions who by this time numbered in the thousands. This time, Francis actually did give in to the "organizers." He named a deputy and retired to a lonely, out-of-the-way mountain. He died near Assisi, almost blind, totally exhausted, and widely revered as a saint.

Pope Gregory IX—as Cardinal Ugolino, he had been Francis's protector and Vatican connection— yielded to popular demand and canonized Francis only two years after his death. Höll points out that the same Gregory IX also codified the Inquisition's procedures against heretics (1223). These two moves—a "two-pronged bureaucratic operation" Höll calls it — granted the people a blessed wonder-worker for their quiet veneration, but reserved the interpretation of his teaching to the proper church officials. In this way, Höll maintains, "the authorities managed to neutralize the 'dangerous' elements in Francis's personality."

Throughout *The Last Christian*, Höll resolutely refuses to see Francis

> *We have to say that, contrary to the standard modern cant about positive thinking, Francis's willpower came from a negation of everything that makes bourgeois men and women — us — function effectively. He pigheadedly rejected the money-making, the planning and saving, the social classes and prestige, the hierarchical pecking orders, the hunger for power and influence, the instrumental use of sex. That is why Francis lacked that archetypal bourgeois mixture of envy, impotent hatred, and furtive admiration of successful people that makes up our resentment.*
>
> —Adolph Höll
> *The Last Christian*

"through the eyes of clerical functionaries." In fact Höll considers Francis neither a saint nor a heretic, "Gregory IX notwithstanding." Francis emerges as a fool (his own word)—"the sort of man who takes the powerful of this world by the arm, as a child might, to tell them the truth—with a force that stuns them to silence."

Höll sees Francis struggling with the "loneliness of bourgeois existence." Francis's consciousness of his individual identity made him what he was and at the same time caused him much grief. Obstinately, Francis contended with his bourgeois ego — for twenty years, up until his death. During that time he experienced sudden illuminations and "overpowering certitude." But Francis found peace only at the end, in the form of a final, shattering denial of his body — the stigmata.

Although Francis would seem to be among the world's losers—a pre-modern person who decisively rejected "modern times"—he has not fallen into oblivion. Yes, his memory has often been sentimentalized by insipid holy-card artists and banalized by backyard birdbaths. Still, in his obscure and undramatic way, Francis has spoken to the numberless common people who over the course of the centuries have felt strangely captivated by him.

Somehow Francis awakens in us a kind of pain that draws us to him. For Höll, the explanation for this attraction is that Francis "is a part of us all; we sense his presence in us as one of the repressed longings of our bourgeois existence, and as the memory of a debt that has never been paid."

After Francis, no one ever took Jesus with such stubborn literalness. Admittedly, few can imitate this sort of life. What someone with conviction could do then has now become an anachronism. Nevertheless, in a way that can be compared only with Jesus, Francis has remained a haunting figure. Despite the

REVIEWERS

DENNIS O'BRIEN *is president of Bucknell University and the author of* Hegel on Reason and History *(University of Chicago Press).*

MICHAEL F. McCAULEY *is the author of* A Contemporary Meditation on Doubting. *(Thomas More Association).*

ABIGAIL McCARTHY *writes a regular column for* Commonweal. *Her books include* Private Faces, Public Places *and* Circles: A Washington Story *(Doubleday).*

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official hagiographic pieties and even Höll's pseudo-socialist rhetoric, we still follow after this madman saint, hoping that the wolf who threatens to devour us, like the wolf that threatened the citizens of Gubbio,may yet be tamed.

A misery of their own

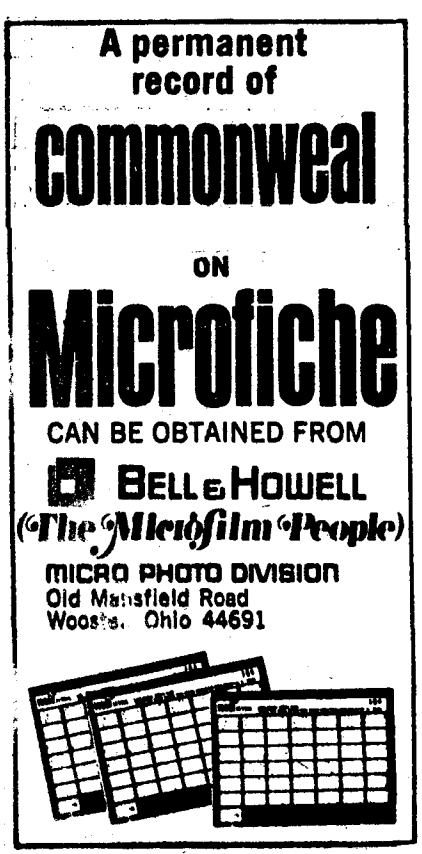
THE MISSING PERSON

Doris Grumbach

Putnam's, $11.95, 252 pp.

Abigail McCarthy

DORIS GRUMBACH'S new novel has a queer timeliness in the context of recent events. It explores the world in which the manufacture of mass-produced fantasy and dream had its genesis—that of the motion picture. It is a world in which the objects of fantasy are as unreal as the dreams woven around them. Peculiar to our technological times, it seems, are the unfinished and damaged people who substitute shadows for reality, who live in their dreams with the synthetic stars of the electronic media. (Their dreams can explode: a John Hinckley obsessed with a starlet shoots a president; a man treasures John Lennon records and kills what he admires, like a cannibal seeking strength from the flesh of his victim.)



The subjects of the dreams may live in a misery of their own. *The Missing Person* is the story of a movie star—a portrait, the author tells us, "not of a single life but of many lives melded into one, typical of the women America often glorifies and elevates, and then leaves suspended in their lonely and destructive fame."

Franny Fuller is a Marilyn Monroe-like sex goddess of the screen. In real life she was an unloved waif of a child, early and brutally introduced to sex, and to what her beautiful face and body could bring her. She rises to heights of success in the glamorous film world of the thirties and the forties, and becomes the focus of unprecedented adulation without ever finding any identity. She is only sure of the physical self through which she becomes an incandescent image on the screen:

> "Well, I'll tell you a funny thing. Everybody thinks I minded that picture of me in the nothing on those cards everybody bought. . . . I didn't. It was printed at a time like this, when I thought I'd lost myself and maybe my mind. But when I saw it, all that curvy pink flesh of mine, it was reassuring. *That* was what I was, who I was, and it was good to know about it. To see it."

In Grumbach's hands Franny's aching emptiness is strangely endearing. The reader can understand the succession of lovers who try to ease it and almost lose themselves in it. There are times when Franny cannot work, times when she disappears for weeks on end in mid-picture, wreaking havoc for her studio and her fellow performers.

> When she laughed, he waited for the tears to come; in her deepest sleep he saw the signs of approaching, inevitable insomnia . . . he attributed these transitions to the price she had to pay for being forced to embody in public all the yearnings of a daydreaming society.'

Franny has strange terrors, she fears being alone, yet retreats from those who come near. In the end she is mythic: "What of her? What really became of her? Let me tell you: She lingers in the umbra between celluloid eternity and the accident of mortality, caught and hung up like an escaping prisoner on the barbed wire of his enclosure. In her, the intimations of immortality are strong. She moves toward them, then retreats, perched precariously on the swing of the unbearable present. . . ."

Perhaps the character Franny could bear the weight of this symbolic significance better if the facts of her life were not so close to those of the real Marilyn. Even the succession of husbands—first the baseball player, then the poet. It is thus hard for her to have a separate imaginary existence in the mind of the reader. But this flaw, if it is one, is more than compensated for by the writer's evocation of the scene against which Franny moves—tawdry, wonderful Hollywood at its peak.

There seems evidence in the prefatory note that Doris Grumbach may initially have thought of Franny Fuller's story as a feminist statement in that women like Franny whom America "glorifies and elevates" are sex objects made larger than life. But if so, as often happens in the creative process, she has transcended that aim in the writing. The creatures of the Hollywood process she gives us, men as well as women, are all victims.

There is Franny's last co-star. "He feared being halted on his way up by sympathy for anyone but Brock Currier of Beverly Hills, born Aaron Feldstein of Chicago, a boy-self buried so deep now that he rarely remembered it had ever existed." But most sympathetic of all is Willis Lord—marvelously conceived and limned in deft strokes—the silent film star who was destroyed by the coming of sound. He has retreated into a silent world and lives out his days before

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an invisible camera, obeying an invisible director: "'Go to the kitchen now slowly, don't rush it. Now over to the icebox, take out the eggs. With your right hand, so you won't interfere with the camera. The butter, then the eggs. . . .' Willis would act as he was instructed to . . . This day, and every other day of his life was being filmed, edited, the film spliced, pieced, canned, and shelved for eternity."

Doris Grumbach's special gift lies in her ability to suit the style and structure of her novels to the world of which she writes. Her previous novel, *Chamber Music*, had the classical form, clarity, and brilliance of a composition for strings. *The Missing Person* is itself like a motion picture—a pastiche of scenes centered on the star, complete with flashbacks, close-ups and fade-outs. And like a well-made British film, its bit-players provide its brightest spots and are unforgettable.

Correspondence

(Continued from page 2)

clear that at least one Southern state has taken the *Rhodes* v. *Chapman* decision as a signal to become even more repressive.

As my colleagues and I continue our fight for prison reform and abolition of the death penalty in the South, we have developed a rather black sense of humor about the Supreme Court vis-à-vis the realities we encounter daily in prisons and jails in our region. It might do the justices good to descend from their marble tower in D.C. and come on a Southern prison tour with us. If any are so inclined, I hereby issue a formal invitation. Perhaps before writing their next opinion on prisons, the justices would like to share some routine experiences in Southern prisons. For instance, being unable to stand upright in a low-ceiling cell where you live for years, or having rats and roaches crawl over you, or to seldom if every exercise unless you are in a state where cotton is still king and you work the fields doing slave labor, or to receive negligible and sometimes harmful medical care.

The litany could go on, but I believe the point is made. If you are poor or black, you still have to get back when you are in Southern prisons or jails. It's a long way from Washington, D.C. to Angola, Louisiana and those well reasoned court decisions read differently below the Mason-Dixon line.

JOSEPH B. INGLE
Director
Southern Coalition on Jails and Prisons

'Unnecessarily snotty'

West Point, Neb.

To the Editors: I find your editorial on seminaries [Oct. 23] unnecessarily snotty. From what empyrean slot of "true intelligence, wit and wisdom" do you judge the matter? I suppose the seminary I attended would not have measured up to your dreamy strictures, but I could hardly subscribe to the notion that it was intellectually comatose. One of its presidents, John Ireland, once came within a hair's breadth of hiring Loisy to teach Scripture, and I suggest that it was a good thing that someone was not comatose *then*, were children to be "taught, fathered and mothered in the faith."

One does not gainsay the advantage offered nowadays by inter-disciplinary arrangements for theological and scriptural studies, but random observation of the nascent blinking you talk about in what is left of the etymologically pregnant notion of seminary will likely occasion its own academic blink.

I like and admire most of the new breed I see, though when I greet them with "Dominus Vobiscum" they don't seem to know what the hell to answer. I am getting a little old to play liturgical house with them any more, and past trying to intimate that a quite proper interest in social justice and related matters did not rise out of thin air in the sixties.

I'm glad that bouncy old John Ireland gave up Loisy for John A. Ryan. And though it is true beyond doubt that laymen do indeed deserve a clergy of "true intelligence, wit and wisdom," isn't it just barely possible that they, quite as much as the seminary, have the burden of providing that kind of fodder? (No pun intended.)

(MSGR.) FRANCIS SCHMITT

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Kirkridge Gathering

The Company at Kirkridge, a supportive network for contemporary Christians will meet February 26, 27, 28, 1982 at Mt. Saviour monastery, Elmira, N.Y. Charles Davis, Theologian, Author will speak on The Transformation of Religious Ideas. Join us and become part of an ongoing group which is ecumenical in every dimension. For information: Anthony Ciccariello, 520 W. Gray St., Elmira, N.Y. 14905.

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Help from our friends

Dear Reader,

Nineteen eighty-one was a year that began in these pages with Graham Greene's "How I Became a Catholic Writer." It went on to a symposium of theologians on the personal experiences shaping their work; to Tom Powers's sobering columns on the world of nuclear weapons; to numerous editorials and articles on Central America, Eastern Europe, African refugees, and world hunger; to Abigail McCarthy's and Jean Bethke Elshtain's reflections on feminism; to Jo McGowan's "Marriage versus Just Living Together"; and to Richard J. Krickus's "To the Finland Border." Spring and fall book issues, movie reviews, art criticism . . . everyone has favorites.

Nineteen eighty-one was also a year in which *Commonweal* finished $29,000 in the red. The year before that, it was $17,500.

Are these figures unusual? Well, yes—they are unusually *low*. Most magazines like *Commonweal* wind up with annual deficits many times these sums. But then most magazines like *Commonweal* are not independent of institutional sponsorship. Or they are the special projects of a few wealthy backers. Or they are the beneficiary of the newest source for funding publications, the right-wing foundations. For *Commonweal*, however, even a relatively small deficit could be fatal.

Except for our friends. Year after year, the contributions of the Commonweal Associates have made the difference between life and death for the magazine. And year after year, Associates of long standing are joined by new individuals willing to share the task of assuring not only *Commonweal*'s survival but its growth. We urge many other readers to use the coupon on the back cover to join these ranks.

But most importantly, for the extraordinary generosity of all the Commonweal Associates, old and new, we express our heartfelt thanks.

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